OLD DUTCH AND FLEMISH MASTERS

ENGRAVED BY

TIMOTHY COLE

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"PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN," BY REMBRANDT.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

OLD DUTCH AND FLEMISH MASTERS

ENGRAVED BY

TIMOTHY COLE

WITH CRITICAL NOTES BY

JOHN C. VAN DYKE

AND COMMENTS BY THE ENGRAVER

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PREFACE

THE publication of this volume requires few words of explanation. That it contains, in permanent form, thirty wood-engravings by Timothy Cole, after the masterpieces of Dutch and Flemish art, is, in itself, sufficient reason for the book's existence. These engravings have been produced in the same manner, and with the same skill and care, that characterized Mr. Cole's earlier engravings after the old Italian masters. Indeed, it was the success of the Italian work that led to his undertaking the present series. Directly after completing his work in Italy, Mr. Cole was asked by the managers of THE CENTURY to go to Holland and undertake the translation of the great Dutchmen. In 1892 he removed from Italy to Amsterdam, where he remained for a year, engraving the pictures chosen for reproduction from the Holland galleries. He then went back to Paris, where he has remained up to the present time, working from the Dutch and Flemish pictures in the Louvre and elsewhere.

In every instance Mr. Cole has produced his engraving with the original picture before him, the photograph being thrown upon the block and its insufficiencies or inequalities being corrected by consulting the original. In this way absolute fidelity to the original has been obtained, not only in line and in modeling, but in giving the exact values of colors under light and under shadow. In determining the truth of a form, a light, or a tone, Mr. Cole's long experience has made him an expert, and though passing from Italy to Holland,—a change from line to color,—he has easily adapted himself to the new point of view, and has interpreted the new methods with the same artistic sympathy that marked his former work. If his engravings gave only faithful reproductions of the originals as

seen by the average eye they would be welcome; but when to this are added Mr. Cole's insight into the spirit of the originals, his observation of suggested meanings, his interpretation of vague, half-hidden tones, their value is greatly increased.

There is another reason for the publication of these engravings, one held in view by the originators of the first series. It seems fitting and proper that a knowledge of Dutch art should be spread through the land by just such reproductions as these. People to-day, though they do not sneer at Dutch art, are far from estimating it at its true worth. They cherish ideals and academic formulas of the beautiful, and are only too prone to overlook that truth, character, wholesome picturesqueness, and surprising skill for which Dutch art is famous. Even with those who profess a love for the Dutchmen, there is a tendency to elevate Dou above Hals and Potter above Cuyp. In brief, while people have been studying Greek and Italian art for years, the art of the Netherlands has been comparatively neglected, and to-day is not at all well understood, except by the few. The engravings of Mr. Cole, then, are opportune, in that they furnish materials for study. In the absence of the originals, which for various reasons the majority of people will never see, nothing could be better designed to take their place than these admirable reproductions.

The pictures from which the engravings have been made were selected with the aim of giving the work of the representative men in Dutch and Flemish art. It was necessary, on account of the great extent of the Netherlands art, that a period only should be given, and so the brilliant painting of the seventeenth century furnished the originals for the engravings. The text that accompanies them, and Mr. Cole's comments, are intended to explain this seventeenth-century art, and to give some account of the history of the schools, and of the individual painters whose works are engraved.

JOHN C. VAN DYKE.

RUTGERS COLLEGE, 1895.

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OLD DUTCH AND FLEMISH MASTERS

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A NOTE ON DUTCH ART

It is amusing, in looking over the histories of Dutch art, to find them all agreeing upon one point. The writers are willing to admit for themselves and the world at large that the Dutch painters were not idealists, and that they were "lacking in the sense of beauty." That profoundly empty individual, Louis XIV., was probably one of the first to discover this lack. To one of his classic descent and Olympian aspiration, to one who emulated Cæsar and yet went to battle in a coach and six, the homely faces and humble scenes of Dutch life and art must have appeared very low and trivial. "*Eloignez de moi ces magots!*" The remark is so expressive that it should be preserved. To be sure it does not convey anything but Louis's disgust; yet by having his opinion of what displeased him, we can imagine what might be his preference in art. He liked the mock-heroic warriors of Lebrun, the flattering impersonations of Rigaud, the insipid gods and goddesses of Coypel. They reminded him of the classic glories of Greece and Rome. They were ideal, heroic, something to aspire to; and doubtless during his life he more than once explained the matter to his court by saying that his painters were possessed of "the sense of beauty."

It depends altogether upon what is meant by "beauty," whether Louis and the art-writers are right in saying that the Dutch painters lacked it. If they are following Winckelmann's conclusion, that "the essence of beauty is in shape"—and that is precisely what they are doing—then they are right if Winckelmann is right. There

is little "shape" in Dutch art. The brow of Jove, the straight Greek nose, the Cupid's-bow mouth, the Apollo form, do not appear. The Dutch lacked them; they did not know them except at second-hand, and they never truly cared for them. Were they then lacking in beauty, or were they merely lacking in the symmetry and proportion of the classic type? It has been many years since the classic arrogated to itself all the beauty of art. Winckelmann has been followed without question into modern times; but now the narrowness of his view is becoming apparent. Beauty does consist in shape, form, symmetry, proportion, so far as these produce pleasurable sensations. But are pleasurable sensations aroused by shape, form, symmetry, proportion, only? Decidedly no. Beauty cannot be defined in an objective way, because it is produced not by one thing, but by many things. We can judge it only by its effect upon the emotions. Whatever emotionally moves one may be beautiful, whether it have symmetrical shape or not, and whether it can be squared with esthetic definitions or not.

To modern eyes there is nothing so pleasing in pictorial or plastic art as the recognized fitness of things to designed ends. The Coleoni statue at Venice—what has it of symmetry or proportion? Nothing. It has been sneered at by followers of Winckelmann for years for that very reason; yet Coleoni still rides in bronze to-day, perhaps the finest equestrian statue in all Europe. It lives, and will live, as great art because of the fitness to designed ends of both horse and rider. The horse is of a different breed from the light prancing horse of the Parthenon frieze. He carries a heavy mailed warrior instead of a naked Greek youth; he is not meant for flight, but for pushing power. The warrior carries a short sword, not a lance; he stubbornly fights, trusting to mail and shield to parry blows; he does not trust to the dash here, the flight there, and everywhere adroitness, quickness, skill. The warfare in Gothic Italy was different from the warfare in classic Greece. That which availed in Coleoni's time was power and weight. Now look at the statue, and see how well Verrocchio understood that! How well fitted are horse and rider to their purpose! The pushing strength, the bulk, the mass, are all there. Could any armed force withstand them? "How full of character!" one exclaims. Precisely so. It is that character which may be defined as fitness to a designed end, that makes the statue beautiful — makes it a great work of art.

From Venice one should go to Mantua and see the heads by Mantegna in the Gonzaga family group. The proportions of the Greek ideal are certainly not given here. The heads are far from the perfect oval. The foreheads are either too narrow or too broad, the noses are abnormally long, the mouths abnormally large, the jaws abnormally square. We should call them ugly people in the life. Yet how calm they look, how honest, how sincere, for all their lack of facial proportion! They are the amalgamated faces of the East and the West—faces that show war and clash and tumult, faces that show diplomacy and cunning, faces that are beginning to light up with the intelligence of the Renaissance. They may be seen again on the medals of Vittore Pisano and the busts of Donatello, stern, silent, and severe. How full of character they are! How fitted are they to impersonate the man of rule in the fifteenth century! And who shall say they do not stir the emotions to look at them? And who shall say they are not beautiful?

When you are in Paris go to the Louvre, and see "The Gleaners," by Millet. The figures are popular, and yet they have no beauty of "shape"; they are far removed from the classic. The faces are stolid and sadly bronzed, the forms are heavy to clumsiness, the graceful rhythm of the female figure is lost in gross muscular bulk, the hands and feet are coarse, almost misshapen. There is a lack of symmetry and proportion. Yet consider how this heavy figure, which counts best as a spot of color on the landscape, was made heavy by this very toil. It has developed and adapted itself to the conditions under which it was compelled to exist. The coarse hand and foot have been produced by contact with the soil; the bulk and girth of form have been brought about by bending, lifting, carrying, day by day and year by year; the bronzed skin has been caused by exposure to wind, rain, sun, and dust. Gradually the figure has accommodated itself to the circumstances until at last we see again a fitness to a designed end. How perfectly they belong to the soil! How perfectly with stubble, stacks, harvesters, and warm sky they belong to the landscape! Chameleon-like, their very coloring seems complementary to the scene. And is not all this beautiful in spite of lack in classic symmetry and proportion? Certainly the world is now agreed in thinking so. And that which makes it beautiful is its sublime truth of character. Take these three peasant women from the scene, and

substitute three classic women by David, Ingres, or Cabanel, and the picture would appear absurd. And why, since these academicians would have symmetry and shape? Because the character of the scene would be burlesqued, the fitness to a designed end would be destroyed.

When one goes to Holland, to study the pictured portraits of that land and its people, he should take with him no classic or academic notions of art. He should forget all about the arts of Greece and Italy, and banish the dogmas of their commentators. He is going to a place where they were unknown, or at the least, disregarded. Latin prejudices in Amsterdam would be almost as much out of place as in Tokio. The error should not be made of judging Dutch pictures by classic rules. They are to be judged by their own rules. Instead of looking for the essence of beauty in shape, one should look for it in fitness and character. These people should be thought of in connection with their land. Climate, soil, and sea, the necessities of their existence, made them what they were. A plain, honest, matter-of-fact race, fond of peace and quietude and homely joys, doing with patience whatever their hand found to do, they lived no Arcadian life of free, open-air enjoyment fitted to develop the imaginative in mind and the beautiful in form. The realities of life were overpowering. They fought the sea for freedom of foot, they fought the Church and the Spaniard for freedom of mind and of body. Their victories impoverished rather than enriched them. The land and the sea were left them to develop — a narrow, low-lying land of dikes and dunes and meadows, a misty and mournful sea, and a treacherous footpath of commerce. The commercial necessities of existence produced the seaports of Holland, the canals, the odd rambling streets, the quaint houses, the picturesque gables, eaves, and nooks, the tavern interiors with smoked rafters; the agricultural conditions produced the meadow, the pond, the grazing cattle, the windmill, the straggling village. There was much material here to encourage local fancy and quaint picturesque conceits, but little to develop a far-reaching imagination. The home product of such surroundings could not be the poet, the orator, the philosopher, the great designer. Instead of these, commerce produced the merchant and the syndic, wars the cavalier and the civic guard, country life the burly peasant, and city life the burgher and the tavern brawler. There are grades from high to low in this Holland life, but the

type is substantially the same. Sturdy of mind and of body, the Dutchman is not elegant or refined. His physical training has never developed height or grace. He walks little, sits much, drinks largely, and becomes stout, heavy, red-faced. His mental training has made him keen, practical in business matters, devoted to gaining the physical comforts of life. He does not nurse visions in religion, politics, poetry, or art. He calls for the common sense of things, and cares little for idealities. Obviously, as Fromentin has observed, there was nothing in art for such a people but to have its portrait painted. Dutch art is only a portrait of Holland and its people.

Look, now, at the Dutch pictures, and see how truly and honestly this portrait has been painted. Take an extreme example—Ostade's "Fish-Market," engraved by Mr. Cole. Objection may be made to the subject, but it is not more ill-favored than the fish-markets of Venice; objection may be made to the people, but they are very like Millet's peasants. The picture is a page in the biography of Holland. It tells of a source of wealth, of an occupation of many people, of streets and buildings and inhabitants in the market quarters. It is the character portrait of one class of people painted large. The crowded little square, the shove and push of hawkers, servants, fishwives, idle boys about the stalls, how truly they are all given! And that man seated at the bench, with his coarse, slimy hands, red face, short squat figure, and heavy clothing, how well fitted and designed he is to sell fish! He has handled them so long that he belongs to them, and knows nothing about other things. He even looks fishy in the face, and resembles fish in color, so that the transition from the one to the other is slight. Then that all-askew shed of a house, with its dingy color, and that misty good-fishing-day sky! How complete the whole picture, and how positively the character of the scene is struck off! This biographer is no writer of fiction. He tells the truth, knowing full well what he has to say and saying it positively.

Another phase of life is met with in "Junker Ramp and his Sweetheart," by Frans Hals. The young gallant in the tavern affecting the soldier, gorgeous in hat and plume, ruffs and doublet, carousing and singing, with his sweetheart clinging to him. The very action of the arm and hand holding the glass, the reel backward of the figure, the flush and the tightly-drawn skin of the laughing face, are all intensely told. That boisterous pair, how

well they typify a certain class of tavern habitués! It may be thought, perhaps, that there are no other classes in Holland than these, that all the people are peasants, fishmongers, or tavern carousers; but look once at Metsu's picture of an interior, with a young officer, and a young lady receiving him. Pleased, quiet, dignified, wearing her rich garments easily, she sits lightly holding a glass of wine in her hand; while he standing, a little encumbered by his heavy boots and military accoutrements, bends gallantly forward, hat in hand, to greet her. At the back a boy —a refined yet boyish boy—holds a dish with fruit. The room is rich in furnishings, and shows the domicile of the higher classes. Here is another transcript from Dutch life. It is of the more refined order, and yet true, characteristic, biographical. These people are well fitted for their station in life, they bear their manners easily, they have always been accustomed to the drawing-room. They were born in society, and never had to struggle into it from without. The young woman's breeding shows in her hands and in her face; the young man's ancestors were officers of the guard before him. Perhaps these ancestors laid aside the sword and pike in middle life to become wealthy merchants. One may fancy he sees their portraits at Amsterdam in the "Syndics of the Cloth Hall," by Rembrandt. Great types of the Dutch race, shrewd, earnest, full of character if a little gross in flesh from good living, they are grouped about a table covered with a gorgeous red cloth. They have been consulting about a matter of business; the books are open before them. Some one enters, and they all look up. The portraits are caught at a glance. And what splendid portraits they are! The physical presence alone—the blood, bone, and sinew—is imposing. And how steadfastly, unflinchingly they look out from the canvas! There is no great spirituality about them; they are merchants, not poets or pietists, and yet what splendid embodiments of the Dutch burgher! Here is the final word in fitness and character, the supremely telling portrait of Dutch life.

II

Yet was Rembrandt confined in his art to the ex... to flesh, and cloth, and light, and space? Did he see nothing of the spiritual? Did he know nothing of human emotion, passion,

feeling? Had he nothing of the psychological about him? A glance at the head of the Christ in the "Supper at Emmaus" will tell us. Never a face in the art of the East or the West contained more pathos, more suffering, more mute mental agony, than this face of a poor, mean Amsterdam Jew impersonating the Christ. Not in scriptural scenes alone did he show this passionate power. In the National Gallery, London, there is a portrait of an old woman, with a lace cap and a white ruff (No. 775 of the catalogue). The face is wrinkled and worn, the eyes deep-set, red as though with weeping, and gazing sadly out. At first, one is inclined to think the sadness of the face is produced by the physical marks of age; but study the expressive chin, the quivering mouth, the contracted, careworn brow, and then look into the eyes, and you will see, or you will imagine, that they are filled with tears. It is more than pathetic; it is tragic. That homely Dutch face masks, and yet reveals, the sorrow and the suffering common to all humanity, the weight of woe that excites sympathy, and makes all the world kin. Therein Rembrandt was world-embracing; therein his art became universal; therein he told not Dutch character alone, but world character.

Rembrandt was about the only one who extended Dutch art beyond the dikes and dunes. The genius and feeling of the man meet with a response from all lands, because he told the great truths of life common to all peoples and races. In that respect he was Shaksperian. But his contemporaries and followers, the mass of Dutch painters, told only the truths peculiar to Holland. Theirs was a local art, speaking for Holland and its people, but for little beyond them. Their work was self-contained rather than comprehensive; episodic rather than historic. This is quite apparent in the Dutch choice of subject. We have been told that, with the Reformation and the freedom of the Netherlands, there was no longer any use for church pictures, and that the religious subject failed. This is true only in part. The Church in Holland never was a patron of art in an Italian sense. It never, so far as history acquaints us, called for the architectural composition and [illegible] wall. Fresco was not the medium of the Dutch; the [illegible] too damp for it. The churches were not like the [illegible] churches, and the painter was no coadjutor of the architect in filling space with architectural lines. He followed the oil medium of the Van Eycks, painted upon panel or canvas, and

never got beyond an altarpiece. The demand for these, even, was slight. Hence, in spite of the Italian imitation of the sixteenth century, and the bringing back to Holland of Italian work, the Dutch of the succeeding century never learned to compose or handle the large religious, classic, or historical picture. There was little call for it, and the painters did not produce it. The nearest approach to it was the large-grouped picture, showing faculties of surgery, regents, syndics, shooting companies, and the like. But this was merely the portrait elaborated and extended; something biographical again, rather than historical. It had no architectural significance, and hung in town hall, hospital, or university like any other portrait picture. The few successes and the many failures with even this subject show how poorly the Dutch comprehended the large composition.

The greatest demand upon the painter came from the wealthy private citizen, and he called primarily for the single portrait. The painting of this necessitated a following of the model and a giving of the realistic likeness. The whole training of the Dutch school seems to have been based upon portraiture, and it was in this department that the very best efforts were revealed. The natural tendency of such a training was to develop a keen sense of observation, and a scrupulous exactness in giving the truth of fact. Hence, there sprang up painters who, with few exceptions, were observers rather than thinkers; men of trained eyes, quick to see every line, and light, and color; men of trained hands, who could record what they saw with unerring certainty; but not men of great reflective or imaginative disposition. "Realists" they have been called, though the word should only be used to define them as painters who followed the model, and recorded what they saw with such truth as they could command.

Next to the portrait, the demand was for small pictures that should decorate the home. The subject most pleasing was then, as to-day in Europe and America, the contemporary theme showing the manners and customs of the people. The Dutch had a proper respect for their own, and were not at all disposed to blush for their national life. They did not boast of it in large military pieces and naval engagements. They pictured fights, but they were usually tavern brawls. Wouverman painted what were called battles, but they were only tavern brawls on horseback. Their chief subjects were the tavern interior, the streets, the

markets, the outlying village, with small figures. Hence came into vogue the genre picture. The Dutch have been credited with originating the genre picture; but that is, perhaps, the result of a misunderstanding. The meaning of that word is misinterpreted. It does not necessarily mean the painting of commonplace subjects, low life, streets, and interiors. Watteau and Meissonier were genre painters, yet they never painted low life. The word does not, or, at the least, should not, apply to a kind of painting, but to a method of treatment. The Italians were figure-painters, because in their pictures the figure was predominant, and the landscape, or whatever background they used, was subordinated. For the sake of conciseness, we may say that they painted figures with a background. The Dutch were genre painters in that they reversed the practice of the Italians. The figure was not predominant, nor the background subordinated. The scene was conceived and painted all of a piece. If an antithetical statement is necessary, it may be said that instead of painting figures with a background, they painted a background with figures. To give the proportions and sense of space in their landscapes, interiors, or street scenes, they had to reduce the proportions of the figures. Hence, we find the figures usually given much less than life size, as in the interiors of De Hooch, Terburg, and Ver Meer of Delft. This is genre painting, but it was not originated in Holland. It was known to some of the Italians, especially the Venetians; but the Dutch were the first to accept it as a national form of expression.

When the background was made to do service for the whole picture, the figure was still further reduced to a mere spot of color, counting for no more in the scene than a post, a tree, a rock, or a cow. It is thus we have represented street and town pieces by Van der Heyden, landscapes by Ruisdael, Hobbema, and Cuyp, shore pieces by Van Goyen and Van der Capelle. All these subjects were handled by the Dutch painters, and their training as observers of the model led them, almost invariably, to give the exact linear and aërial importance of each object depicted, whether it was a man, a chair, a building, or a tree. Their method of seeing was not arbitrary, but justly natural, in that it comprehended nature as a whole, unemphasized in any part. That they did emphasize, at times, certain features, such as figures or cattle, is true; but this was not so much the result of their observation as of their method of lighting.

III

It was in workmanship that the Dutch were preëminently strong. The skilled eye and the trained hand were theirs, and as masters in the craft of painting they have never been excelled. Was it Sir Joshua who said that the style of Steen "might become even the design of Raphael?" The quotation will at least serve to point the distinction between the Italians and the Dutch. Raphael was a great artist, a thinker of imagination, a draftsman filling architectural space with composed lines. Steen was no great thinker, draftsman, or composer; he was simply a master-workman with the brush. Like all the Dutch painters, he was trained in the knowledge of materials and methods. He knew the technic of his craft, and wrought understandingly. Perfect workmanship was the sign-manual of the whole school, and yet this should not be construed to mean that this workmanship always gave the absolutely realistic appearance. The Dutch were no such realists. They knew that painting was a conventionality, and they frankly acknowledged it in their pictures. They followed nature as far as their materials would allow, but they always had a shrewd notion that there was a point where nature left off and art began. They were abundantly aware of the fact that they were picture-makers, not map-makers; and, like many other painters, they did not hesitate to distort nature for pictorial effect.

This distortion appears prominently in one feature, for the truthful rendering of which the Dutch have been superabundantly and undeservedly praised—I mean the feature of light. They understood it as a conventionality of art, a means of gaining relief, and they so employed it; but, barring a few exceptional men, they did not understand it as a great truth of nature. They knew how to handle it in spots, to throw it here and there in a picture, and thus to brighten dark corners; but light as a uniform illumination over a whole scene, not even Rembrandt quite comprehended. The long dispute over the so-called "Night Watch," as to whether it represented night or day, is in itself proof of something wrong in its lighting. The effect of a general illumination is wanting. In its place we have an arbitrary mass of shadow over the whole scene, with flashes from something like a gig-lamp illuminating it here and there in order to bring into relief certain prominent figures. The beautiful

picture by De Hooch, "The Buttery," which Mr. Cole has engraved, is another case to the point. The lighting of the figures, and of the screen or wall back of them, is arbitrary. The light is supposed to come from somewhere in the foreground, but that illumination is not enough for the painter. The little closet at the left has a flash thrown through it to illuminate that portion of the picture, and the room at the right has again another illumination. This is all very knowingly and cleverly done, and it gives one the feeling that there is bright sunlight without that is trying to steal in at every door and window; but it nevertheless points to the Dutch use of light in spots and points rather than in large masses. In open-air scenes, in streets, and in landscapes, they were much better; yet even here there is a management of light that has an affinity with the candle-light effects of Dou and Schalken. Rembrandt darkens his upper sky and darkens his foreground for the sole purpose of driving his light into a spot of the central sky; and Cuyp is very fond of the dark side of a mountain in his foreground, beyond which light is seen pouring diagonally into the middle distance. One of the best Cuyps in existence, the "Landing of Prince Maurice," in Bridgewater House, is marred by a shadow drawn across the foreground in order to increase the power of the light beyond it.

It can hardly be thought that the Dutch lost much by this arbitrary lighting. They sacrificed a truth of nature, but they gained a force in art. The sharp light made possible great relief; the deep shadow lent itself readily to atmospheric effect, to suggestion, and to mystery. An arbitrary practice it was, but, nevertheless, a potent means of expression. That its range was limited is true. It could be applied to the portrait, to the small interior with few figures, or to the small picture of any kind with powerful effect; but the large historical canvas was beyond its scope. Such lighting was incompatible with composed lines and many groups. The central illumination, handled as the Dutch handled it, was not radiant enough to carry over a large scene. The sides and top of the picture fell into great masses of shadow, as in the "Night Watch," and these had to be illumined by repeated spots of light. The result was a lack of tone, a feeling of spottiness on the canvas, and a disjointed composition. Such, generally speaking, was the historical canvas in the hands of these painters. Whether a lack of demand for the large canvas produced a lack of knowledge with

the painters, or whether their method of illumination was against it from the start, is not worth speculating over. The fact is, it was not a success. The painters were not in sympathy with it, and they did not usually produce it. What they did produce was the single figure, the genre picture, the landscape with cattle, the still-life.

In charm of color the painters of Holland, in their way, were again quite unexcelled. Their work should not be seriously considered for its linear composition. It is primarily an art, revealing the sentiment of color, light, and shade. They composed a picture by massing these. Moreover, their pictures were painted primarily to reveal these beauties. A material aim it may be thought, but no more so than the necessities of picture-making required. And it is necessary to repeat that the Dutch were picture-makers. In painting a portrait they were, of course, concerned with the truth of likeness, dignity, carriage, character; in painting a group, a cattle piece, a landscape, they were again intensely concerned with the exact truth of character, but that never made them forgetful of the truth of art in color, light, and decorative effect. The religious, literary, or story-telling side of painting did not usually interest them. "A Woman at a Window," by Ver Meer; "A Dutch Interior," by De Hooch; "A Drinking Party," by Steen, speak only of the physical presence. When Ostade scatters people through a room he is not interested in their being there for an anecdotal purpose; he cares little what story they tell. They are usually unrelated in their occupations, and about the only feature that binds them together is a technical feature—the relation of color, light, and shade. He is seeking always the pictorial rather than the literary; making a picture rather than telling a story.

And yet, the Dutch must not be regarded as mere surface painters, brilliantly as they painted the surface. They had an abundance of sentiment and feeling; but, unlike the English painters, they did not display these in their subjects. They displayed them in their color, light, and methods of expression. Here is the chief reason why the Dutch pictures have never been popular with the world's masses. People see little sentiment in the faces and actions, and speedily conclude that the whole art is gross and sensual. But there never was finer artistic feeling shown in art than in the pictures by these Dutchmen. They grew emotional over bursts of light, sympathetic over color harmonies, mysterious in shadow masses, and their handling of the brush shows with what delight

they caressed this or that feature of detail. They loved the work for the work's sake, and this love is apparent in their pictures. It has been said that they distorted light for a pictorial effect and it may be said that they sometimes distorted color for an harmonious effect. Cuyp and De Hooch are perhaps too brilliant for the actual truth of the Netherlands, and Ruisdael and Hobbema are certainly not brilliant enough. Yet poetic feeling gave them license in these matters, and it was deep sentiment and love of harmonious relations that caused the distortion. The painters could not express their poetry of shadow and color in any other way. That there is a poetry of color, light, and space, no one, at this day, thinks of denying. The Dutch possessed it, and the Dutch picture will be found a poem of depth and earnestness if it be looked at as a pictorial poem. It is not a literary poem.

In brief, the Dutch painters loved character, fitness, honesty, truth. They were not ashamed of their own people and civilization, and they wrote the pictorial history of their time with frankness and candor. Picturesqueness, rather than symmetry and proportion, was their inheritance from nature, and this they produced with charming results. In point of view they always regarded a scene more for its appearance than for its meaning, and hence their art must be judged more by what it looks than by what it means. It was, as a whole, a local art, reflective only of Holland, and yet, within its scope, as sincere an art as that of Italy, and as perfect in every detail of craftsmanship as that of Japan. It is the autobiography of a self-contained people, who in peace, in war, in commerce, in art, have maintained their own with honesty and integrity. It is an autobiography that no world-student can afford to leave unread.

FRANS HALS

"THE JESTER," BY FRANS HALS.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

Chapter I

FRANS HALS

(1580?–1666)

In the fifteenth century there was no art in Holland that distinctly spoke for the land or the people. The nation had not yet declared itself. The Burgundian dukes were in power, and, though encouraging commerce, letters, and arts, they were bestowing most of their favors upon Flanders. Holland was merely a northern province treated with some contempt. In art, the Van Eycks, with the schools of Bruges and Brabant, led the way, and the painters at the north did little more than follow them. In the sixteenth century the Flemish painters, especially those of the Antwerp school, fell under foreign influence. Their own art was apparently not to their taste, for shoals of artists put off to Italy, there to study, assimilate, and imitate the subjects and methods of the Italian masters of the Renaissance. The example of Flanders was contagious in Holland, and again the northern painters followed. But toward the end of the sixteenth century Holland threw off the Spanish yoke, gaining thereby political freedom; and shortly afterward her painters threw off the Flemish-Italian yoke, and became Dutch in method and spirit. In the last quarter of the century Mierevelt, Ravesteyn, and Frans Hals were born, and with them, at the opening of the seventeenth century, began the great period of Dutch art.

The apprenticeship to Flanders and Italy had not been wasted time or labor. The Dutch had learned color and handling from the one, drawing and some composition from the other; so that, almost at [illegible] we find the accomplished craftsman, the man skilled in methods and materials, the painter versed in form, color,

and handling. Frans Hals is one of the earliest, and, perhaps, the most remarkable instance of the craftsman in all Dutch art. It is not often that the early man of a school speaks the latest and most mature language of that school. The idea is usually the first strong utterance; the style is the result of improved training and is more often seen in the late representatives. But Frans Hals reversed all this. He was practically the founder of Dutch painting, yet he realized to the full the Dutch idea and subject, and that, too, with a style that is astonishing in its cultured maturity. In method and in manner, in technical expression, and in the skill of the craftsman, he stands at the head of his school. There never was a better painter in any school.

Hals was primarily a master workman, and it has been said that he was nothing beyond that; but this latter statement should be accepted with some qualifications. It is true that he had not the reflective, the speculative, the romantic temperament. He was a seer and a recorder rather than a thinker; a man devoted apparently to the beautiful in the material rather than in the intellectual, yet far removed from the mere mechanical realist of cold facts. Some natures reveal their artistic feeling in what they say, and others reveal the same feeling in how they say it. We see this continually exemplified in modern poetry, where the artist in language is quite as apparent as the poetic thinker; and modern painting is filled with painters who are poetic only in their means of expression. Frans Hals belonged to this class. He was a painter of great power, and, withal, of great sensitiveness and feeling in the pure art of painting. His work shows to us the shrewd observer of fitness and character, the learned student of tone and relation, the harmonist of full frank colors, the rhapsodist in all that relates to technical expression. The finer qualities of the man came to the surface through his eyes and finger-tips; but it was no common realist's eye that perceived the beautiful harmonies of silvery whites and blacks in the regents' pictures at Haarlem; it was no mere workman's mind that grouped and held together those great pictures by giving due force and character to each figure in light, in value, and in color; it was no time-serving, mechanical hand that drew and painted them so truly and yet so easily. Frans Hals was something more than a mere technician. He was a great artist.

A man's true nature appears in his work, but unfortunately Frans

Hals's biographers have not studied his work sufficiently. In its stead they have substituted his subjects, and the few reported facts of his life, to prove that he was a very material soul, and consequently must have produced a material art. It is said that he was a man of free habits, a frequenter of the tavern, a brawler of police-court fame, who beat one wife, wronged a second, and finally in his age became dependent upon town charity. Such is the record we have of the man, a record preserving his (perhaps) occasional vices, and recording not one of his virtues. Shall we conclude, then, that the man had no virtues, that he was of low tastes, and that the police docket is but a sample page of the man's whole mental and artistic make-up? It is a conclusion too often and too hastily reached, and it is one that his pictures absolutely deny and confute. They do not show that he was gross or beer-sodden in either mind or hand. They show that he was a man of individual and positive view, a painter of great freedom and strength, and a colorist of infinite charm and delicacy.

His subjects, indeed, might be regarded, in a popular sense, as unselect. They were of the common stock from which all the Dutch painters drew, and had nothing whatever to do with the ideal. They were things seen, not imagined; people of Holland, not people of the air. He was peculiarly fond of the bluff, robust type, and he painted it in a fresh, vigorous manner to complement the character. Even his portraits are of this type. They have health and good spirits, substance and shadow, as in nature; but again they have little of the ideal, or what is called in portraiture "character painting," about them. Hals followed his model, and painted only what was apparent. His well-fed burghers probably showed little more than physical life, and he was not the man to paint false character into a face. He was not a Van Dyck, painting scholars, lords, and princes; and he had little use for the intellectual gaze, the refined face, and the lordly air. Possibly he never had a chance to paint men of noble mien; and yet it is more probable that his sympathies went out to people of his own kind, and that he painted the frankly human because he believed in it and loved it for its truth's sake. His other subjects would seem to indicate this. He is always free, vivacious, hearty, full of animal spirits. Sometimes he lightly jests, as in the portraits of himself and wife at Amsterdam; sometimes he is whimsical and boisterous as with his Fools and Jolly Men; and sometimes he is sober, sedate, calm, as in his Haarlem pictures. Good-natured,

candid, and honest, he is always pleasing and never frivolous. Whatever may be his subject, he is serious in its handling. And that brings us around to our first conclusion, that the real feeling and power of the painter lay in his methods of expression. What he said was often coarse: but his manner of saying was eloquent, cultured, refined. His was the poetry of rhythmical color, light, and handling.

As a technician, Hals had few equals, and it is hardly extravagant to say that he had no superior. Velasquez and Rubens were different, and as artists they were greater; but as pure painters they were not more individual or more certain than was Hals. In drawing and modeling he was remarkable for giving the truth of mass and bulk in the physical presence. Flesh, bone, brawn, and weight he could translate with convincing precision. This effect he gained not by line drawing. He was not a man of clear outline like Holbein. His modeling was effected by regarding the exact relations of color tones. . The black hat and white ruff of the "Jolly Man," engraved by Mr. Cole, do not hold their place by virtue of their outline or rim, but by virtue of their mass in black or white, each mass exactly true in value, and properly related to the head and to each other. This scrupulous regard for values enabled him to paint with flat tones, and thereby suggest modeling without actually giving it. The black hat has a crown to it, though it is not seen; the brim circles the head, though at the back it is only indicated. The variation in the shades of black gives modeling, and suggests what is not shown. In this flat painting Hals anticipated Manet and all the Whistlerians by two hundred years; and for this very feature he is greatly admired by the moderns of to-day. It speaks strongly for the genius of the man that he did not learn or appropriate this from any master or school. He originated it.

In the handling of light Hals was quite different from Rembrandt and the painters who were born a few years after him. He did not display it in spots upon the canvas, or break the continuity of the picture by several focuses. There is nothing forced about his illumination. The light came not from the sky, but chiefly from the figures themselves, as was the manner of treatment employed by the great Italians. The banquet piece that Mr. Cole has engraved illustrates this. The ruffs and sashes and faces are shown to be highest in light, and in comparison the windows, from which the light would naturally come, are dark. This is arbitrary

lighting, but Hals is not to be blamed for it. It was the painters' practice of the time,—a conventionality, and yet handled by Hals with great regard for the tonal truth of the artifice. His distribution was even, uniform, well-regulated, so that he was not compelled to sacrifice figures at the sides or back, nor colors under shadow. In color he was at first a little florid, and perhaps lacking in depth and delicacy; but he soon began to employ a richer and more mellow palette, upon which all colors seemed to be placed—orange, red, blue, green, brown, gray, black. These he used with great purity and tenderness, showing always the sense of a colorist in giving the proper fitness, resonance, and relationship of colors, under light and under shadow. Late in life his hand failed him, but not his eye. The colors became subdued, and he grew fond of rich blacks and pearly whites flecked with gray. He was less sparkling, less varied, but even more refined and harmonious. He now threw his remaining strength upon the general tone-effect, and gained a charm of sobriety. It was the final, perhaps the highest, step as a colorist in the painter's life, but it is marred by the feeling that it was in measure a makeshift to hide the inequalities of a failing hand.

It is not wonderful that the hand of a person of eighty-four should forget its cunning. The man, physically, was sunk in twilight; the feebleness of old age was upon him; but in the days of his strength there never was a more positive and powerful brushman. His handling is of superb freedom and dash. A staccato quality in it lends to energy and vivacity. He did not often indulge in the long serpentine sweep of Rubens. He used little oil, and his pigment was not so fluid as that of the great Fleming. He modeled by spots and areas, painted often in patches, and occasionally dashed in a hat or cloak with a large, full-loaded brush. He knew almost infallibly just where to begin, just how far to carry, just when to stop. He never tortured, or dragged, or thumbed; he struck swiftly and accomplished his aim at one blow. We gain no idea of correction or emendation from his work. It looks to be done once and finally, and that, too, with the ease of a hand that does not pause to deliberate, but dashes forward, fully conscious of its touch and certain of its result. Hals is again strictly original in all this. His brush-work, so much admired and studied by modern painters, followed no tradition, and was not learned or imitated from others. It was invented, created, improvised by Hals to suit his conceptions and characters, and is a positive stamp of his own

individuality. It is in itself, aside from the other qualities he possessed, sufficient to mark him as a technician of extraordinary resources, and a painter of prodigious power.

His works are scattered through all the galleries of Europe. There are good examples at Berlin, at Dresden, at Paris, at Amsterdam; but perhaps the most complete showing of the painter's work is to be seen in the corporation and regents' pictures of the Haarlem Museum. Here he appears from his thirty-sixth to his eighty-fourth year, in eight large canvases, containing groups of life-sized figures. The first picture, painted in 1616, shows him sharp and abrupt; he models with difficulty; the hands and heads are somewhat heavy, though strong in character; the coloring is over-warm. Eleven years later he painted the group of portraits Mr. Cole has engraved, and we see him almost, if not quite, in his prime. His color is more brilliant, yet more delicate; he has mastered modeling; the heads are singularly individual; his light is equal in distribution; his brush-work charming in its freedom. In 1633 he painted the "Assembly of Officers of St. Andrew." He is now surely at his height, with a gamut of wonderfully brilliant color. He uses all hues and shades of hues, mingling them together in a glowing harmony. He has overcome every technical difficulty of art, and his brush is intelligent to the last degree. To quote Fromentin, he has now "as much taste as Van Dyck, as much skilful execution as Velasquez." He is positive, clear, sure, convincing. His zenith has been reached. The next picture, painted in 1641, shows us a change. Hals has become more sober in his colors, using large quantities of black, gray, and brown. He is still virile and impressive, and there is great richness in his somber palette. In 1664 there is a deepening and an intensifying of this sobriety, as shown in the last two pictures of the series, painted when Hals was very old. Feebleness is stamped upon the canvases. His colors are still pure, refined, sober almost to sadness, but his once unerring hand has deserted him. He dashes here and there, but is ineffectual. He no longer draws surely, but he still retains a sense of relation. As though conscious of his failing powers, he seeks to cover up his errors by spreading a tonal quality like a veil over the whole scene. The result is both admirable and pitiful. It records the last impression of an eye as sensitive as any that ever received light, the last effort of a hand as masterful as any that ever grasped painter's brush.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

FRANS HALS is one of the very few Dutchmen who cannot be thoroughly appreciated or studied outside the towns which claim them. To know him one must go to Haarlem, where he occupies an eminence similar to that of Rembrandt in Amsterdam, though with the advantage of being far more comprehensively illustrated. There, in the museum of the town hall, he is represented by eight large canvases varying in length from eight to thirteen feet, the figures of which are life-size. They are corporation and regent pieces, ostensibly portraits of officers of the orders of St. Andrew and of St. George, and of the lady managers and governors of the hospital for old men and women, and of the Elizabeth Hospital. They are arranged in chronological order, appertaining to the periods of the artist's life and embracing his long career. It is a rare treat to see an array of masterpieces, imposing, well lighted, and placed at a convenient height for examination, affording at a glance fifty years of an artist's labor. The first of the series is of the year 1616, and shows Hals to us at the age of thirty-six; the last, of 1664, shows him to us at the extreme age of eighty-four, two years before his death. These corporation pieces were much the fashion in those days, and form a not inconsiderable feature of Dutch art. Frans Hals and Rembrandt have done the finest things of this kind, and their works are not merely portrait groups, but pictures. The example I have engraved is one of the best of the series, and displays Frans Hals in full flower. It is of the year 1627, when he was forty-seven years old. It represents the officers of St. Andrew at a banquet. Each individual may be identified, since he is numbered in the painting, and his name is affixed to the bottom of the frame. I did not engrave the numbers, for the names are of little or no account at the present day; they have, in fact, all merged in the one name of Frans Hals.

The painting is in a warm, fresh gray; the background is brownish. The various coats of arms in stained glass are indicated with delicacy and precision against the outside background of foliage. The scarfs are tawny, orange, or tender blue; the ruffs are white, and in them the artist employs touches of the pure pigment. The clothes are principally of dark stuff figured with embroidery upon the surface, the detail broadly yet delicately indicated. The hands are fine, and all well individualized. In this he is superior in judgment to Van Dyck, his contemporary, who, considering the hands of no particular importance in this respect, always used one model for them. There is a delightful harmony in the whole. It is charming to observe the rich but simple treatment; the breadth and certainty of his touch, its sharpness, promptness, and celerity; his free, bold, intelligent, supple handling, its dash and brilliancy, together with its moderation. There is a buoyancy, a joyousness — in fact, a jocoseness about him that places him most in sympathy with the painters of to-day. Here are much fiber and unction; good red blood, and plenty of it. How fine and living are his heads, and how expressive! Moreover, the action and movement are stirring. One can feel the moral atmosphere that pervades the group of the original Orangemen, pioneers in the cause of civic and religious freedom in the Netherlands.

To the period of this picture belongs "The Jolly Man" of the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, one of those light subjects which Hals threw off in moments of relaxation; yet in point of technic it may be more remarkable than his more serious work in displaying the deftness and

rapidity of his touch. In coloring it is golden and luminous. The dress is ocher, and the background is of a duller tone of the same. The hat is black, and the ruffs are white. The jolly fellow is in the act of singing; this explains the action. His face is all animation as he trolls his merry song. One outstretched hand is in the act of marking the time—a very characteristic action in a comic piece; while in the other he holds a wine-glass, grasping the lower rim.

"The Jester" is an uncertain work though certainly displaying remarkable cleverness of handling. I had engraved this example before the others. When I had nearly completed it, the director of the museum came round to look at my work, and told me that the painting was considered by competent judges to be a doubtful example of the master, painted probably by some one of the Hals family, for Hals had sons who were skilful painters. It was not until after I had spent some six weeks at Haarlem, engraving the corporation picture, and had again confronted "The Jester," that I felt competent to pass judgment upon it myself. I could then clearly see in it the evidences of a heavier hand, something foreign to Frans Hals. The touch is conscious, and displayed apparently for its own sake. In the hand striking the strings it is bungling. In his touch Frans Hals is simplicity itself, perfectly natural and unconscious. At times it is perfectly indifferent, as in "The Jolly Man"; and again, in his more finished works, the smoothest possible rendering in engraving would be necessary to give an adequate idea of its softness, and of the subtle blending of the tints.

It is only within the last quarter of a century that Frans Hals has received the recognition due to his brilliant talents. Unfortunately, the records of his life are very meager; but what we have of his history, from latest researches, shows him to us as a very different character from the mere sot his former biographers made him out to be. His habits were convivial, and he took no thought of the things of the morrow. His renown was great in his day; he was a member of the Guild of Rhetoric, of the Civic Guard, and of the Guild of St. Luke, and he received a pension from the town of Haarlem in his old age. The Hals family occupied a place of distinction among the patrician houses of Haarlem fully two centuries before the artist's birth; but owing to misfortunes consequent upon the war of independence, his parents removed to Antwerp, where, about the year 1580, Frans was born. While he was yet a boy, however, his family returned to their native town, where the artist was mainly educated, and where he spent the rest of his long and uneventful, career. He is supposed to have received some instruction in his art before he came to Haarlem, but it is known that at this latter place he entered the school of Karel van Mander in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

In genre painting, to which the taste of the times strongly set, Frans Hals led the way. He was one of the first who sought to break up the hitherto staid and serious forms, and to introduce homely reality and easy comedy. He is particularly happy in the delineation of mirth—a master, in fact, of the art of painting a laugh. The titles of many of his pictures, half-lengths of life-size and smaller, to be found in the galleries of Europe,—such as "The Jolly Topers," "The Jolly Trio," "A Jolly Toper Sitting at a Table," "Laughing Women," "Singing Boys," "The Frolicsome Man," "Table Company," etc.,—are sufficiently suggestive of the good humor that has earned for him the title of "jolly Frans Hals."

He was twice married, living happily for nearly fifty years with his second wife, by whom he was the father of a large family. In the Amsterdam Museum there is a portrait of him seated beside his wife

"THE JOLLY MAN," BY FRANS HALS.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

upon a sylvan slope within the shade of overhanging foliage, which represents him to us quite as we should imagine him in his moments of relaxation, when he is lightly mocking us. His wife, resting her hand upon his shoulder, joins him in sympathetic look and gesture.

In the Haarlem Museum is a picture representing the school of Frans Hals. It shows the interior of a studio, in which a number of artists are drawing from a nude model, while the aged painter, who presides, is greeting a late comer at the door. From the inscription on the back we learn that it is the *atelier* of Hals as it appeared about the year 1652. He was then nearly seventy-two. His success as a master is seen in the powerful influence he exercised over the works of his contemporaries, and in the number of celebrated men who, directly or indirectly, sprang from his studio.

A story is told of a visit paid to Hals by Van Dyck. The latter was then twenty-two; Hals, nineteen years his senior. As a pleasantry Van Dyck suppressed his name, announcing himself as a wealthy stranger who wished to sit for his portrait, but who had only a couple of hours to spare. Hals fell to with his usual impetuosity, and completed a portrait for the sitter's inspection in even less than the limited time, much to the satisfaction of the latter, who expressed an astonishment not altogether feigned at the speed of its execution. "Surely," said he, "painting is an easier thing than I thought. Suppose we change places, and see what I can do." The exchange was made. Hals instantly detected that the person before him was no stranger to the brush. He speculated in vain as to who he might be. But when the second portrait was finished in still less time than the first, the mystery was solved. Rushing to his guest, he clasped him in a fraternal embrace. "The man who can do that," he cried, "must be either Van Dyck or the devil!"

T. C.

REMBRANDT

DETAIL FROM "THE NIGHT-WATCH," BY REMBRANDT.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

Chapter II

REMBRANDT

(1606–1669)

The Dutch painter of the seventeenth century is not a difficult person to comprehend, if we look at his work from his point of view. He is an observer, a student of what he observes, and a consummate technician. He has an eye for the outer view, and he gives little beyond the pictorial, with a smack of individual style in the expression of it. That is, generally speaking, his beginning and his ending in art. There are, however, some exceptions among the Dutch painters, and the most famous exception of all is Rembrandt.

That Rembrandt had an outer view of great clearness needs no demonstration. There were few of the great truths of nature that escaped that keen eye we have all seen so many times looking out from his own portraits. His was the comprehensive vision of a painter who saw the characteristic breadth and harmony of creation, and penetrated the justness and truth of all forms and types, however humble, in the scale man had chosen to place them. He saw truly, looking without, but his eye was not fashioned for the outer view alone. It had a habit of reversing itself, and looking within to read the thoughts of the painter's mind. The inner vision told of joy and sadness, love and sorrow, triumph and defeat. The mysteries of existence, the burden of inequality, the problems of good and evil, of the here and the hereafter, all were there. The eye read what the mind brooded over, and, when it turned to look without again, it was so tinged and hued by mental colors that the world was seen sometimes through a flood of joyous sunshine, sometimes through a saddened half-light, and sometimes through a

mist of tears. The personal thought and feeling of the man crept into his work. All that he had enjoyed, and endured, and suffered; all that he loved, and believed in, and sympathized with, so swayed and dominated him, that he could not keep them out of his art. Shut away from the world in a small northern country, and even there a solitary man among his fellows, he probably did not realize that his joy and his sadness were, in different form, the joy and sadness of the whole world, and that in the end he would be accounted one of the great expositors of human passion. He was not consciously fulfilling his destiny. He was simply revealing his own ideas in his own manner, because he could not do otherwise. Applause did not lead him astray; censure could not change him. He painted on in the way nature had marked out for him, and, from the beginning to the end of his career, the outer view was suffused and glorified by the inner vision. One turns to Coleridge and reads: "Art is of a middle quality between a thought and a thing —the union of that which is nature with that which is exclusively human." It seems as though Coleridge had written that sentence standing before a picture by Rembrandt.

There are, then, two men to be considered in Rembrandt. The technician is by no means to be overlooked. His brush is not so free as that of Hals, but it is more varied and fuller of resource; his drawing and coloring are excellent, and, all told, he is one of the greatest of the Dutch craftsmen; but there is nothing in his technic that raises him above and beyond Holland. It is the mental and emotional attitude of the man's mind that appeals to mankind at large. Let painters say what they will, the tickling of the eye by a display of mere form or color counts for less in a work of art than the stirring of the emotions by passionate feeling. The first is a means; the second is the end of art in itself. Rembrandt pleases the eye, but his superiority over every other painter in Holland, and his rank among the great artists of the world, are largely due to his pleasing the mind and the heart. He was, from the start, a student of expression in look and action, a man interested in the psychological side of man. His natural bent of mind developed a genius for these very features. He was always concerned with the mental status of his characters, and he ever seemed to inquire: "How should I feel and act under such circumstances?" Thus it was that he read his own emotional feeling into every character he created.

We can trace him in his work, step by step, and year by year, and can see his sympathetic feeling deepen and intensify as he became more worldly wise. At first, he had something of the gaiety of youth about him, and was at times joyous without being foolish. He gathered about him rich dresses, turbans, Oriental trappings, chains, armor, jewelry; he dressed himself in these, and painted his own portrait with soldierly bearing and a dare-devil smile. He was fond of the physical, and painted portraits of the hale type, like the "Gilder;" painted Europas and Proserpines; painted sacred subjects; and all with much seriousness, but not with the depth and penetration of later years. Saskia was his wife; and he was happy in painting her, now in one costume and now in another. At Cassel she is gorgeous in rich robes and hat, composed in features, frank, honest, very dignified; at Dresden she is seated, smiling, upon Rembrandt's knee, while he is holding aloft a glass of beer and laughing boisterously. This was his time for laughter. Success was his, he was renowned, and had many pupils; but his head was not turned by it. He never neglected or paused from his study of humanity; and he was already in sympathy with the sadder and the sterner side of life. The trend of his mind was toward pathos; he was interested in old men, Jews, beggars, the forlorn, and the miserable; and the way he took up their cry of the street and the quarter was almost socialistic.

A little later, he was asked to paint the so-called "Night-Watch." It was a great opportunity. The picture required dash — something that should have the bustle of movement and the brawl of color and light about it. There was little chance here for the play of emotional feeling across face or figure, little chance for a subjective nature to show itself. Paolo Veronese could have done it superbly; Rembrandt tried it and practically failed. He was not in sympathy with it, mentally or technically. His mind was too serious for the gay sortie of a shooting company. And Saskia — his beloved Saskia — was dying. After her death misfortunes came trooping thick upon him, but he did not, even now, pause in his study of humanity. His art deepened and saddened under the burden of increasing poverty, neglect, and sorrow; but it did not flag or decline. Then, in one year, he painted the "Good Samaritan" and the "Supper at Emmaus," in the Louvre; and in them we have the full expression of the man's emotional power. The pity and the tenderness of the "Good Samaritan" are not to

be touched upon, since a master pen has already described them. the "Supper at Emmaus" has been engraved by Mr. Cole, and, though the color is not given, the expression is, in measure, translated. And how truly marvelous is that expression! Did Rembrandt understand the Gothic law of painting soul well by showing body ill? The thin, emaciated figure, the coarse hands and feet, the wan cheek, the dark lips, the pallid face, would all seem to say so. "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." This is not the glorified Christ, who has risen triumphant over death and is now free from all earthly taint. It is the Christ of Golgotha, still marked by the trial, the persecution, the crucifixion. The shame and the humiliation, the sorrow and the mental suffering, the ignominy and the torture of his death, are about him as he sits there, breaking bread, his soft brown eyes looking up, the pale ghostly light of the tomb about his head, the very architecture back of him suggesting the tomb itself. Was there ever such a painting of mute agony, and yet, with it, meekness and forbearance to the last? There is only one face in art that approaches it—the face of Dürer's "Christ on the Cross," at Dresden. The splendid Paolo Veronese, with the Jove-like type of Christ,—he who could have painted Rembrandt's "Night-Watch" so gorgeously,—tried and practically failed with this theme. Emotional expression was his weak feature; it was Rembrandt's strong feature.

Rembrandt was at his height; yet still a student bent upon intensifying his expression of character and deepening his shades of meaning. As he advanced in years, the type of age seemed to attract him more and more, and he tried to give the sum of existence in the faces of old men and women. His rabbis wear the air of the tongue-lashed and fire-scathed, and his own portrait, which he continued to paint, is at times defiant-looking in fine robe and bright color, though more often sad-faced and somber-hued. The shadows of misery and want were heavy about him. He was sounding the depths of woe in his own life, his eyes were looking within, and ever his brush was telling the fellow-feeling for man which was so strongly stamped upon his heart and brain. Yet whatever his personal despondency, he did not despair in his art. He worked on, his eye seeing clearer and surer the great universal

truths, and separating them from the merely local; his mind broadening to the great problem of existence. At the last he failed quite rapidly. His hand no longer obeyed his mind. It had started sharp and precise; it ended coarse, hot, fumbling. Apparently the bitterness of life had worn him out, and he died and was buried (so far as history tells us) unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

The peculiar technical knowledge wherewith Rembrandt was enabled to show his emotional feeling—that feeling which so often developed into tragic passion—may be suggested in a sentence. It was a thorough understanding of human expression, not only in the face, but in the hands, the arm, the bowed head, the bent back. All his life he was studying the outer manifestations of the emotional nature. As a young man he was painting his relatives, his acquaintances, his own portrait. Year after year he sat before his glass painting himself, watching the expression of the eye and brow, noting the play of the mouth and the chin. The heart spoke through the mobile face, and he would know its language. The classic face did not attract him. It might have symmetry and proportion, but it did not have expression; it did not betray passion like the irregular face. No wonder he made friends with the beggars and Jews of the quarter, and used one of them for the figure of the Christ in the "Supper at Emmaus." What he had to say could be well told with no other face. Again, he could not use the classic figure. It was too coldly calm and self-conscious in its proportions for him. The worn outcast and the pallid pilgrim were more fitted to him. And what meanings he portrayed in the bended knee, the stooped back, and the upraised hand! Look again at the "Supper at Emmaus," and see the incredulity and wonder written in the hands and turned heads of the two disciples at the table; see the fear and trembling of the boy bringing in the dish.

This synthesis of character, this strong grasp of the salient features, appeared not alone in mean figures heavy laden with sorrow. The wife of Manoah, at Dresden, large and splendid, is the epitome of prayer, as she kneels in her gorgeous robes; and the lieutenant in the "Night-Watch" (the figure at the right in Mr. Cole's detail) is the very poetry of motion. Whether of high or of low degree, whether in emotional or in physical life, Rembrandt had the power of characterization. The firm foot, the substantial body, the burgher face speaking so loudly for animal life, how positively he could tell

them! We see them in the "Syndics of the Cloth Hall," at Amsterdam. They are almost vulgarly healthy. Mr. Cole, in a private letter, writes: "It [the Syndic picture] fairly smells of beef and beer." Precisely! That was doubtless the quality of the men, and Rembrandt, like Hals, never falsified the character of anything. He told the truth—the truth of fact in the outer man, the truth of feeling in the inner man. He was a master of truthful characterization and expression, and therein lay his great power.

Rembrandt's life-long study of appearance naturally produced the anatomist, the physiognomist, the trained draftsman, the nearly perfect modeler. He was each and all of these. The features of the face that were the most speaking were the ones he studied the most, the ones he portrayed with the greatest force. Nothing could be finer than his drawing of the eye, the lid, the brow, the cheek-bone, the mouth. In the modeling of the forehead, the skull, the side of the jaw, the chin, he could give the feeling of bone-structure and flesh with conclusive reality, and there never was a painter who could equal him in mingling flesh and hair. In the apparently small feature of blending a thin mustache over a mouth, so that the mouth was really emphasized rather than hidden by it, he showed a mastery of materials that no other painter ever approached. He thoroughly understood the human face, and yet was not lacking in a knowledge of other features. Hands, and feet, and nude figure he sometimes gave in a coarse, strong way, as his bathers testify. They were never eclectic or ideal in type. He worked from the model, and the Dutch type, somewhat heavy, wanting in height, and often distorted from work and the wearing of coarse clothing, was given with all its shortcomings; yet again with a powerful sense of actual life and being. The figure has truth of mass, the hands are flesh and blood, the feet stand firmly as though bearing a weight. With or without clothing he knew the human form in all its parts, and he reproduced it with force and truth, if not always with grace and elegance.

In giving the setting to the face or figure he employed an arbitrary, but no less effective, chiaroscuro. He hardly comprehended light as an illumination, an equal distribution. It was to him largely a means of emphasizing certain expressive features. He forced it, drove it in full power upon the forehead, nose, cheek, or chin. The eye, and often the side of the face or the forehead under a hat, he liked to leave in shadow, for the mystification that the shadow produced, and for its contrast with the high light. It was by contrast

that he gained strength. He made a center of light in his pictures, and from this center there was a radiation outward that soon lost itself in deep, luminous shadows, that enveloped, surrounded, and really gave the setting to the figure. Not only was the contrast of light up and down and across the picture, but it extended into it. His foreground was high in key; his background somber, gray-green, brown, or deep golden. Under such a lighting the chief features were powerfully relieved and the minor features subordinated, oftentimes to mere suggestion. Color fared in a similar manner. There was nothing for it but to follow the course of the radiating light. Hence, in the lighted portions, it was high-keyed, brilliant, glowing; but under shadow it could not, and did not, retain its truth of tone. It was sacrificed in a merciless manner, bleached, distorted, almost demolished. Even in landscape, he was inclined to follow this method of working, though here he was compelled to regard a sky illumination to some extent. Occasionally, too, in his figures, he dispensed with the deep contrasted shadow, but he did so with evident reluctance. He knew that shadow was the foil and the relief of light; he knew its haunting, suggestive qualities. Without it his figures would have to hold by their clear profile, and he placed no love or confidence in outline drawing. The sharp contrast of light and dark was as much of a necessity with him as the irregular face. He could not fully express himself without it.

It was, as has been said, an arbitrary method of lighting, and yet with the portrait, the single figure, or even several figures, as in the "Supper at Emmaus," it proved a powerful method. It was the dramatic force of the stage applied to painting—a climax from dark to light, from somber hues to brilliancy, from the less truths to the greater ones. But it had its limitations, and Rembrandt showed them. When he grappled with the large composed group, his method proved unequal to the emergency. The sharp degradation of light from the chief figures left the figures at the sides and back submerged in shadow. This he tried to obviate by creating several centers of light. But a picture loses strength by many focuses, just as a play loses strength by many climaxes. The "Night-Watch" is eloquent of this. Rembrandt apparently knew little of linear composition; his reliance was on composition by masses of light and dark; yet he tried some line effect in this picture. The flag at the left, the column and spears at the right, the architecture at the back, seem to cut the picture into three

pieces, like a triptych. The central compartment (a detail from which is shown in Mr. Cole's engraving) he used for his strongest light; but the light ran off into shadow so quickly that it was not sufficient to illuminate this central piece alone. He began, then, forming new focuses of light. We see one of them brought to bear on the face of the man with the gun, another one on that odd little girl,—whose presence in such a scene is enigmatical, until we understand that the painter needed her just there as a spot of light and color,—and, again, the figures in the background form still other focuses. As for the figures at the sides, beyond the spears and the flag, they were plunged in shadow, and required separate centers of illumination to be seen at all. The result was that the picture had many lights, but no one illumination; had many figures, but no one composition; had many parts, but each part unrelated to the others. It was not successful in Rembrandt's day, and since then it has been cut down to its present size; but it is still unsatisfactory. It is not held together, it is spotty in light, and the different focuses are bewildering and confusing. As seen to-day, it is a mass of yellow, and a striking picture in that respect—but Rembrandt can be neither praised nor blamed for it. He probably used Venice turpentine as a vehicle, and it has thrown a yellow tone over the picture.

The limitation of Rembrandt's system of illumination is shown in many of his larger pictures. The "Lesson in Anatomy" is a blaze of light on the corpse, and the heads of the doctors are but reflecting mirrors; the "Good Samaritan" is not satisfactory, and tells of neither night nor day; the "Manoah's Sacrifice," at Dresden, is disjointed; the "Jacob and the Sons of Joseph," at Cassel, has been cut down. The "Syndics of the Cloth Hall," at Amsterdam, is one picture of half a dozen portraits, and not open to objection as a composition; but here Rembrandt abandoned his method for a fuller and broader illumination. The truth is that his peculiar chiaroscuro, when he carried it out fully, admitted of only a few feet (sometimes a few inches) between the highest light and the lowest dark, and such a lighting could not be satisfactorily applied to the expansive canvas. It was appropriate to the portrait and the single figure. It was with such subjects that Rembrandt was the most successful. It is by them that he should be judged.

We have been told many times that Rembrandt was "a perfect master of light," and we have also been assured that, as a colorist,

DETAIL FROM "THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS," BY REMBRANDT.

he ranks among the world's great masters. Both statements are true if taken with qualifications. If it is necessary that the illumination of a picture should be even in distribution whether in full light, half light, or shadow, then Rembrandt was not a luminarist; if color should be preserved under light and under shadow, maintaining always its fitness, quality, and absolute relationship, then Rembrandt was not a colorist. But ordinary rules did not apply to this man any more than to Michael Angelo. He made laws unto himself, created an arbitrary light, and produced an arbitrary color. He sacrificed the half lights to the full lights, and he sacrificed the half tones of color to the full tones in a corresponding manner. Truth of color he doubtless knew, but disregarded. His method of lighting compelled him to do so. Color had to decrease in value with the swift degradation of light, and Rembrandt as a colorist was a slave to Rembrandt as a chiaroscurist. Yet again in color as in light he gained strength by this forcing process. The swift transition from dull brown to glowing red, or from bleached gray to brilliant yellow, was startling, ringing, dramatic. It was the climax again — the rushing up to the final point with ever increasing splendor and power. But was this disregard of the truth of color an indication of the colorist? It can hardly be thought so. Rembrandt was a colorist beyond all question, but he was so in spite of his sacrifices rather than by virtue of them. He knew what colors were beautiful in themselves, and he knew how to arrange them in harmonious and beautiful combinations. Moreover, he knew the richness, transparency, and depth of tones. He was seldom flaring or shrill in color. A tone might be false, but it was not raw; it might be despotic, but it pleased the eye. That his colors were indescribably subtile in both quality and harmony is true, but their real charm was more elementary, and lay largely in their choice and arrangement. In this he was not showing color for color's sake, in a Paolo Veronese sense. It was not with him a sole means of expression — the final aim of a painting. He had something to say regarding humanity, and color he used as a means of saying it beautifully.

As a workman with the brush he was not so free as Rubens, Velasquez, or Hals. Like Titian, he kneaded with thumb and brush, though at times he struck off with great ease and sureness. Nothing could be more masterful than his occasional modeling of a cheek and jaw with apparently one bold sweep. A comparison

of so simple a feature as the fluted collars in the portraits by Rubens, Van Dyck, and Rembrandt, will soon convince one that Rembrandt was the master, easily first in giving the sense of reality, though his work was not so cleanly done on the surface as that of the others. In the final finish he often allowed his brush to plow through and show the under-painting, for the sake of luminosity, so that his surfaces are often tortured in appearance, and his methods difficult to determine. It is certain that his darks and his backgrounds were painted thinly in a lucid vehicle, and afterward overlaid with thin glazes. It was thus that he obtained his depth, richness, and transparency in shadows. The transparency of his lights he probably gained in a different manner; that is, not by thin paintings, but by broken touches, that allowed portions of the light under-painting to appear at the edges. It is said by Mansaert that he rarely blended his colors, laying one on another without mixing them; but this is not apparent in his work, probably owing to the plowing effect already spoken of.

His work shows but slight trace (and that only in subject and light) of influence from master or school. His precursors gave little indication of his coming. The man seems quite original in mind and hand. Doubless his chiaroscuro came to him from Caravaggio, but how or when no one knows. In modeling, in handling, in color, and, above all, in thought and feeling, he stands quite by himself, the great genius of Dutch art, and a painter who ranks with Titian, Rubens, and Velasquez, among the world's great masters.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

ON my first arrival in Holland, fresh from Italy and the classicism of Italian art, and having my mind imbued with its fair and heavenly images, I was ill prepared to drop immediately into sympathy with Dutch art. Though I felt I should experience no difficulty in this respect, yet when I walked through the Ryks Museum in Amsterdam, a strange sadness came over me, and I felt inclined to look around on the collection of small pictures as upon a dreary waste. How should I ever learn to love these genre subjects, with what appeared to me their gross materialism? I could have wept. I had descended from Parnassus, and was once more among the haunts of men. I resolved to plod on in faith, however, doing my best with whatever came to hand, and to see what the influence of association might do in changing this attitude toward them. The "Night-Watch," by Rembrandt, was the only thing that possessed any attraction for me. I had already had some acquaintance with the great Hollander, having engraved, at the

Louvre, some ten years ago, his wonderful "Supper at Emmaus," which left an indelible impression upon me; so that my interest in him was not wholly effaced by my long sojourn in so opposite a field of art as the Italian. I decided to engrave a detail of the principal figures of the "Night-Watch" as my first essay in Dutch art.

Nine months have passed since that time, and now I marvel greatly, as I pause before my favorites in the gallery, that I could have been so blind to their charming qualities. Every day I made a new discovery, until I began to count the masterpieces by the score. Now I see working in these earnest Dutchmen the same spirit of sincerity, and love, and reverence, which actuated the Italians. These honest workers tell us in their pictures that all things are miracles, and that each part and tag of anything or of any one is a miracle; and so they paint the hair on a cow's back with the same reverence that Fra Angelico painted the flowers of paradise, and an old woman's face is as divine as that of an angel. How can there be too much fidelity and realism where nature is approached with humility and reverence? Even the sublimity of the Italian, which lifts one to the skies, is not wanting in the landscapes of Ruisdael and Hobbema. I learn now that what charmed and fascinated in the work of the Italians holds me equally in the work of the Hollanders. A confession of moral nature, of that self-forgetfulness or unconsciousness so captivating, of the large and tender soul, of purity, love, and hope, breathes from the one as from the other. This surely is the true excellence of all really great works of art, without which this business of picture-making were but a trivial and profitless affair.

The "Night-Watch" is the chief attraction of the Ryks Museum, and is Rembrandt's largest and, in the opinion of many, his most important work. It measures 11 by 14 feet, and is dated 1642. A contemporary copy of the work by Gerrit Lundens, to be seen in the National Gallery, London, and a photograph from a drawing of it by Jacob Cats, made in 1779, which hangs in the Rembrandt Room, where the great picture is installed, show that the work has been cut down on all sides, thus seriously altering its composition as the great master left it. More than two feet were lopped away from the left side, carrying off two figures; something less from the top; from the bottom the foreground has been shortened by eight inches or more; and the same amount has been taken from the right side, cutting away half of one of the principal figures, which formerly was entire. The work was painted for Frans Banning Cock and his company of harquebusiers, and is one of the many guild pieces which in those days it was the fashion for corporations to have executed, wherein the portraits of the various members were depicted. The real title of the piece is the "Sortie of the Company of Frans Banning Cock." The title of the "Night-Watch" is false and misleading. This erroneous title originated with French writers of the end of the eighteenth century, and Reynolds, in his "Tour through Flanders and Holland," has added to its publicity in his note upon the work. He evidently saw it before it was cleaned of its thick coating of varnish, and of the smoke of lamps and innumerable Dutchmen's pipes,—for the Dutch are famous smokers,—since he says that it disappointed him, as he had heard so much respecting it, and remarks that it had more the appearance of a Ferdinand Bol, from the prevalence of a sickly yellow color. Seen under this circumstance of partial obscurity, it is no wonder that it should have been taken for a night scene. Since then it has been cleaned, and six years ago its varnished surface was again freshened by the simple operation of subjecting it to the fumes of alcohol; and those

who saw it after the operation speak with rapture of the wonderful luminous depth and brilliancy of its coloring. After five or six years, however, the varnish crackles again, and obscurity once more sets in, rendering a renewal of the operation necessary. This is always the case with pictures covered with a spirit varnish.

The scene represents the company emerging from their guild-house in the golden sunlight of afternoon. The captain, clad in deep brown or warm black, with a red scarf about his waist; and his lieutenant, clad in a yellow jerkin and breeches, a white scarf about his waist, and a white plume adorning his yellow hat, precede the group, which in composition recedes on each side. The distribution of color against the soft, warm, and tender obscurity of the background is magnificent. The grace and easy action of the man in yellow are especially admirable. The coloring of Rembrandt's pictures appears more yellow when seen in proximity with other works of a colder and harsher tone. The position of the "Night-Watch" is unfortunate in this respect, since on each side of it is hung an immense corporation picture by Van der Helst. But shutting out of sight and mind everything else, and so getting into the key of his coloring, one can appreciate what a truly marvelous painter he really was.

Of the three hundred and fifty paintings by Rembrandt, Holland possesses only twenty-five; but among these are the "Night-Watch," the "Syndics," and the "Anatomical Lesson."

Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn — for such is his full name — was born at Leyden, a town near Amsterdam, famous in the history of the independence of the Netherlands, and as the birthplace of many great artists and other men of renown. Rembrandt's parents were well-to-do folk, and he was intended for the study of law; but his father, discovering his strong bent toward art, placed him, at the age of twelve or thirteen, under the instruction of Jacob van Swanenburch of Leyden, and, after three years, under Pieter Lastman of Amsterdam, who had been in Italy and knew something of Italian art. Remaining with Lastman till he was eighteen or nineteen years old, he returned to his parents at Leyden, and nature thereafter became the object of his profound study. In 1630, when twenty-four years old, he felt himself strong enough to do something on his own account, and accordingly went again to Amsterdam, rented a large house, and divided the upper portion of it into cells or small studios for the reception of pupils, who were to be thus separated from one another for the better preservation of their individuality. Fortune smiled upon him. His house was constantly filled with students of good families, who paid him 100 florins annually, while the income he derived from their paintings and etchings amounted to 2000 or 2500 florins, or more. Among his scholars were Ferdinand Bol, Govert Flinck, Gerard Dou, Nicolaes Maes, Van Hoogstraaten, Koninck, Victoors, and many others, — thirty, in fact, in his house at a time,[1] — a busy hive of painters and etchers. He painted his famous "Anatomical Lesson" in 1632, when only twenty-six years old.

After keeping bachelor's hall in this way for three years, he effected an alliance with the influential family of Rumbartus van Ulenburgh, burgomaster of Leeuwarden, and a member of the court of Friesland. This same Rumbartus was more than once a political envoy from that court, and related that he had been treated with marked affability and retained at dinner by William the Taciturn on the very evening when the prince, on

[1] Sir Francis Seymour Haden calls attention to this fact in showing that many of the etchings bearing Rembrandt's name are the work of his pupils, and further informs us that at The Hague it was unlawful for an apprentice to sign his own work.

leaving the table, had been assassinated by a Bourguignon. Saskia, the daughter of Rumbartus, became Rembrandt's wife in 1633, bringing him love and wealth. There followed a period of eight years of prosperity and sunshine, culminating in the "Night-Watch." Then the death of his beloved Saskia, which happened in the same year, changed everything for him. His life corresponds to his scheme of coloring in its contrast of light and shade; and the events of his latter days, like the forms in many of his backgrounds, are clouded in obscurity. We have a glimpse of its luminous side from Vosmaer. We see him at home, surrounded by his pupils, living a life of perfect simplicity, sober, regular, and absorbed in his work, a happy father and blessed with a devoted wife, in high favor and receiving good prices for his pictures. His lower rooms were filled with all kinds of objects of art curiosity. He had a mania for collecting, and it is said had works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, Giorgione, Titian, Palma Vecchio, Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, and the earlier Dutch masters. It is evening, and he is at home. In a large back room,—their living-apartment, tinted blue,—he is seated at an ample table, beneath a cluster of candles, which, shaded, sheds its concentrated light—a Rembrandt flood—over the principal objects of interest. Rembrandt is sketching or etching; his wife, seated near by, is tending the baby—their son Titus—or sewing; while in the background are dimly perceivable a score of pictures, antique heads, a large curtained bed, a press, and a chest of drawers or "what-not." Or friends drop in, and gather round the table within the circle of light, and sketches are passed around, and we have a picture of the "Staalmeesters" in their broad-brimmed hats. I remember seeing a picture of his in which he seems to have symbolized the happiness of these all too fleeting years. He is seated in hilarious mood, with his wife upon his knee, and his arm about her waist, while in the other hand he extends on high a glass of wine. It might in truth be called "one hour to madness and to joy," such is its complete abandon. All the many portraits he has made of himself during this time are of a romantic and fantastic kind, and show him to be a lover of fine array; his leonine head is adorned with long, floating locks, and his mustache is elegant and twirled. But the romance of his life coming to an end with the death of Saskia, we have no more portraits of him until about six years afterward, when, in 1648, a remarkable one appears, evidently a real likeness. His locks are shorn, a plain citizen's hat replaces the former jaunty cap and plume, his mustache is closely clipped, gone are all his "silks and fine array." He is seated at a desk at work, beside a plain, small window, and looks at the spectator with sad and reflective eyes. We now for the first time behold the man as he is, chastened and fit for his great work, the "Supper at Emmaus," which he painted in this year.

Saskia in her will bequeathed him the usufruct of her property, on condition that he should continue a widower, with remainder to their son Titus. Financial depression overwhelmed the city, and influenced the sale of his pictures. The fashion in art changed. Some of his pupils, in the estimation of his contemporaries, became of greater account than he, and rose in high favor, insomuch that the poets lauded them at his expense. His prestige had departed. It was no longer thought necessary to paint like Rembrandt to command success. The thing to do now was the reverse, and six florins was enough for a portrait of his. Little is known of him during these dark days. About 1654 he married again, and in order to satisfy the claims put forth by the trustees of Titus, who was yet a minor, he was obliged to make an inventory of his goods, which he valued at 40,000 florins, but which realized at auc-

tion less than 5000 florins; and this being found insufficient to satisfy the demands made against him, he was obliged to sell his house for 6700 florins, and became bankrupt; his brother and sister, who had inherited larger shares of the patrimonial estate than he, likewise falling into extreme poverty.

All through the darkness of these latter days he shines forth with increasing luster in his works; for, as Seymour Haden says: "He was no less than at any period of his career adding to his power, and both by his painting and etching accumulating immortality." He painted "De Staalmeesters" ("The Syndics") in 1661, eight years before his death. In this year he appears, from Walpole, to have wandered to England, and to have painted some fine things at Hull. It has been said that he was married a third time, and that he did not die so poor as is supposed; but this is doubtful. In the "Livre Mortuaire" of the Wester Kerk, Amsterdam, appears the following simple entry relating to his death: "Tuesday, 8th Oct., 1669, Rembrandt van Rijn, Painter on the Rovzegraft, opposite the Doolhof. Leaves two children."

T. C.

FERDINAND BOL

Chapter III

FERDINAND BOL

(1616–1680)

A MODERN theorist has recently told us, with a love of the sensational and the paradoxical characteristic of the present time, that there was virtually no such painter as Rembrandt, and that the majority of pictures ascribed to him were painted by his pupil, Ferdinand Bol. The logic of the argument, if there be any, would seem to be based upon the fact that Rembrandt at times painted down to the level of Bol. The reverse of this conclusion seems not to have been considered. Did Bol ever paint up to the level of Rembrandt?

The leader of a school is always held responsible for some of the works of his pupils; but it is not often that the pupils are credited with the works of the leader. Some masters (Bellini, for example) made it a business matter to sign their names to school work as a guarantee that the pictures came from their workshop; and oftentimes, where they failed to sign their names, the directors of galleries have been only too prone to attribute to Raphael, Rubens, or Rembrandt, pictures that should be given to Giulio Romano, Crayer, or Bol. Then, too, a commercial spirit has sometimes led to forgeries of great names. As a result of all this a painter's style is often a badly confused problem if gallery attributions are accepted as infallibly true. In the Pinacothek, at Munich, there hung for years portraits of Bol and his wife signed with Rembrandt's name. Every one who had made a study of Rembrandt could determine, almost at a glance, that they were not his work. Now, the signatures have been proved forgeries; the pictures have been assigned to Bol, and the sub-

jects are said to be Flinck and his wife. These portraits came to Munich from the Mannheim Gallery, and with them, from the same gallery, came a "Sacrifice of Isaac" and a "Holy Family," which still bear the signature of Rembrandt. The modeling, handling, and coloring in all four of the pictures are substantially the same. It is not impossible that one man painted all of them, and that the man was no other than Bol. For Rembrandt never modeled in such an uncertain manner, never used such pallid flesh-tints, never painted with such a smooth brush. He was more pronounced and individual in every way. In his late years he sometimes painted with a coarse, harsh touch, but never with thinness or timidity. The Munich pictures show his style at second-hand, reproduced by a pupil. Between the original and the imitation there is only a surface likeness. For Bol was to Rembrandt as Mazo to Velasquez. They both painted works that resembled their masters at their weakest; neither of them painted works that resembled their masters at their strongest.

Bol is said to have been the first and the best pupil of Rembrandt, and to have quite superseded his master in public favor at one time. That is no matter for wonderment. The populace probably preferred a catching likeness, a white skin, and a finished surface, to a broader and stronger rendering. To-day the same sort of a populace prefers Bouguereau's flesh-tints to those of Roybet or Cormon. It proves only the problematical value of popular judgments. A portrait by Rembrandt placed beside one of Bol will quickly indicate which was the stronger painter. A comparison of the modelings of the jaw, the cheek-bones, the mouth, the eye, the hand; a comparison of the colors of flesh and robe, of the transparency of lights and shadows, will prove that Bol never rose to Rembrandt's height as a technician. He could not; he had neither the knowledge nor the skill of hand, and above all he had not the mental grasp of his master. Methods of the palette, focuses of light, poses, sacrifices of color, were features that he, in common with the other pupils of Rembrandt, levied upon and tried to reproduce; but not one of them could seize upon Rembrandt's sympathetic mind. It was an individual endowment, and as far beyond imitation as the inventive genius of Tintoretto or the joyous spirit of Correggio.

Comparisons are not popular in present-day criticism, and yet they are the only means by which a man's rank among his contemporaries can be estimated. Nor are they unfair if properly applied. It is not to be inferred that because Rembrandt's pupils did not equal him that, therefore, they were wholly wanting in good art. Ferdinand Bol was an excellent painter of the second rank. He belongs in the second rank because he had no great originality in either mind or method. He apparently did not believe in what he himself saw; he believed in Rembrandt's way of seeing. While his master's star was in the ascendant he paid it the compliment of reflection; when it began to pale to the popular eye, he looked about for a newer light. He swung here, swung there; and finally abandoned the pictorial treatment of the Dutch to follow the Flemings with the historical canvas, after the manner of the Italians. His success with the composed figure piece was not great. It was an imitation, and a foreign imitation at that. Bol was not more happy in it than were the other Dutchmen of his time. His illumination was against it, he rambled restlessly with his figures, and he was never quite free from nervous constraint. His best work was done when he was following Rembrandt with the Dutch subject —the portrait. Here he was quite at home, and his shrewd, perceptive qualities rendered him good service. He had not that intense mental realization of the model peculiar to his master; but he possessed much clearness of vision, and saw acutely the physical make-up of the man before him.

As a draftsman and a modeler he did not always show that certainty of touch that brings conviction, and yet the heads in the "Regents of the Lepers' Hospital," at Amsterdam, are solidly wrought out; and the portrait that Mr. Cole has engraved has firmness and substance about it. Accent he seems to have sacrificed somewhat to an even surface. He was often over-nice with his finish, and in that way brushed out much of the vigor that lies in the first swift strokes of the brush. In composition he was, perhaps, even cleverer than his master. His placing of lights and darks, his balances of objects, his general filling of space, were sometimes very shrewd. He had studied out the methods of the studio as known in his time, and, like all the Dutchmen, he was a trained workman. In light, though following his master, he was not so violent in concentration. He spread the illumination over

greater space, though reserving his highest lights for the prominent features. It was usually a pale, ghostly light, and it resulted in a pale, washed-out color. The flesh-notes were usually weak; the reds were toned down with admixtures of gray; brown was rubbed into his purples; the violets and greens were bleached, and a grayish-yellow tone predominated. He was seldom brilliant or gay in contrasted colors. On the contrary, he seemed to have chosen the harmony of accord rather than the harmony of contrast; and in this he was certainly pleasing, if not stimulating.

All told, Bol was not what one would call a great master. His chief lack was in the element of personal conviction; but he was not lacking in charm of mood and grace of recitation. He had the attraction, too, of refinement; and it is not astonishing that he was popular in his own day and generation. His pictures are now scattered through the European galleries. The greatest number is at the Hermitage, St. Petersburgh, though there are good examples at Dresden, Munich, and Amsterdam.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

FERDINAND BOL was the oldest student in Rembrandt's house in Amsterdam. He was one of the first, and by many is considered to have been the best. Very little is known of his life. He was born at Dort, in June, 1616, and became a pupil of Rembrandt toward 1630, when about fourteen years of age, and is not known to have had any other instructor. In 1652 he became a citizen of Amsterdam, and died there, on July 24, 1680, a rich man. Bol is considered chiefly as a portrait-painter, though he executed many historical works, and his etchings are highly esteemed. In his early pictures he adheres to the manner of his master, as may be readily observed in his portrait of Saskia, Rembrandt's wife, in the Brussels Museum, and in other of his works prior to 1645, in which he comes very near his master. After this he endeavors to strike out for himself, and becomes different from Rembrandt in every way, and does not succeed very well, until finally we have his masterpiece, in which he shows a style of his own. This is the "Regents" in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, which was painted in 1649. It is a portrait group of great excellence, and has been even ranked superior to Rembrandt's works in the truthfulness of its flesh-tones. It is a large canvas (eight feet long by six feet high), and represents the regents, or governors, of the Lepers' Hospital at Amsterdam — an institution abandoned in 1862. There are four figures, clad in black, and wearing broad-brimmed hats, the solemnity of their attire being relieved by the rich Persian covering of the table at which they are seated, while an attendant leads in a poor child whose disfigured head tells the story and motive of the work. Charles Blanc mentions that on the occasion of an exhibition of paintings for some charitable purpose, this canvas, which had hung forgotten and unnoticed

"PORTRAIT OF A MAN," BY FERDINAND BOL.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

for two centuries in the old Leper House, created quite a sensation; and that during the exhibition Rembrandt was neglected for the sake of this fine work by his pupil.

Another life-size group by Bol in the Ryks Museum, representing the lady patronesses of the same institution, is equally fine; and, as Bürger remarks, "When one has seen these two works, one places Bol above Van der Helst himself, and second only to his great master." The refinement attained by Bol at this later period is shown by the "Portrait of an Astronomer," the only work of this artist in the National Gallery, London. It is dated 1652 — the year in which Bol went to Amsterdam.

The subject which I have engraved — "Portrait of a Man" — is in the Louvre at Paris, and is dated 1659. It is a plain, matter-of-fact subject, agreeably varied upon the canvas, frankly disposed in all its parts, and its very careful and smooth finish bears evidence of a discreet hand. Its color is a simple scheme of rich warm tints, but neutral. From the deep, tender darks of the dress up through the browns of the background, and from the delicate greenish tints of the sky to the mellow tones of the flesh,—the culminating point of the whole,— all is sensitively bound together by a very subtile feeling for harmony. The canvas measures three feet three inches wide by three feet ten inches high.

T. C.

GOVERT FLINCK

Chapter IV

GOVERT FLINCK

(1615–1660)

The Bol portrait at Munich, once attributed to Rembrandt, shows us the face of a man who has a painter's blink about the eyes, a perceptive and an analytical look, and a cunning if not winning turn of countenance. Whether the portrait represents Govert Flinck, as we are now told, or merely some worthy town merchant, will probably never be definitely determined. The likeness seems, however, to tally very well with what history tells us of the character of Flinck. His genius was largely a genius for assimilation, and his ability an adaptability. He was shrewd in taking advantage of everything that could help him, and clever in learning what others had to teach. His first master, Jacobsz, of Leeuwarden, was more of a preacher than a teacher, and Flinck exhausted his stock of painter's knowledge at an early age. He then went with Backer to Amsterdam, to study under Rembrandt, of whom he doubtless knew through Saskia's relatives at Leeuwarden. It is put down to his credit that he had not been with Rembrandt more than a year when he painted pictures that could not be told from the master's. The story is doubtless true, and illustrates the absorbent quality of the young painter. He and Eeckhout were excellent followers when once Rembrandt had set the pace; but when they tried a pace of their own, they were not so successful.

Nevertheless, Flinck developed under Rembrandt considerable strength; and a great deal of easy manipulation of the brush that has always made his work interesting to painters. His modeling was not that of Rembrandt, especially in the face and

hands; his color was sometimes brilliant, but often lacking in depth; his light was concentrated in measure like his master's, but with less clearness; and his shadows were like Eeckhout's in their inclination to opacity. His work, however, made up a general resemblance to the work of Rembrandt; and that which made it particularly effective with the masses was its glitter and sparkle in local spots of light on jewelry, buttons, buckles, and the like. In this he carried further than Rembrandt, as he did also in his flowing style of handling. He had a facile manner of brushing in hair, beards, loose robes, and draperies that gave an impression of great mastery; but his cleverness in this respect will not always bear close analysis. It is intelligent but not very profound work, for the very good reason that Flinck himself was not a very profound man. The "David and Uriah" at Dresden, and the "Isaac Blessing Jacob" at Amsterdam, show him in the Rembrandtesque stage of his career, producing dashing effects with much swing and gusto. Probably at about the same time, or perhaps later, he produced such portraits as those of Uytenbogaert and Vondel at Amsterdam, the former of which was long attributed to Rembrandt. They are strong, compact examples of portraiture that would reflect credit upon almost any painter, and are further proof that a follower of a great man is not necessarily a little or inconsequential person. Even the Mannerists and Eclectics of Italy occasionally wrought with a supreme power, and the pupils of Rembrandt were not all mere imitators of their master. At times they used borrowed tools with a masterful hand, and in quite an original manner.

Flinck seems to have been associated with Rembrandt, or at the least under the influence of his style, from 1636 to 1648. After the latter date his perceptions led him to think that Rembrandt was *passé*, and that a following of Rubens and the Italians would be more consonant with good art and popular applause. He always had a keen sense for the drift of public caprice; so he laid aside the chiaroscuro of his master, diffused his light, and began cultivating line and form in the historical figure piece. The great flowing lines of Rubens seem to have caught his fancy completely, and though he was unfitted by nature and training to handle such subjects, he, nevertheless, took them up and won public favor with them. It was a false step for him as a painter. All the true artist in him

"PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG GIRL," BY GOVERT FLINCK.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

departed when he forsook Rembrandt and the Dutch subject. His expansive composition was frail, his color became florid and blatant, his flesh chalky, his handling slippery, ineffectual, uncertain. There was a good deal of glitter and show about his historical pictures, and, in consequence, many commissions poured in upon him from court and official circles. Prosperity and patrician acquaintances quite ruined him, and he ended as a perfunctory delineator of classic or official themes, much like many a latter-day academician.

Flinck, quite different from his great master, never knew the pinch of poverty, the rich man's contumely, or the world's forgetfulness. He was born rich, married a daughter of a director in the East India Company, was patronized by the court and the municipality, and, it is said, had so many commissions toward the last that he turned over his portrait orders to Van der Helst. He died at forty-five, and Vondel mourned over him in bombastic verse, as a young Apelles prematurely called to the shades. He was, perhaps, not undeserving of his success, for he was a painter of ability; but when we think of the public casting honors and commissions at the feet of Bol and Flinck,—honoring them, too, for their catch-penny features,—at the very time when Rembrandt was plunged in obscurity and neglect, we are inclined to begrudge them that praise which they really merit. Both Bol and Flinck were painters of substantial worth; but in studying their works we are never allowed to forget the master who made them worthy.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

GOVERT FLINCK, born at Cleves in 1615, was among the earliest of Rembrandt's pupils. He had previously served an apprenticeship to Lambert Jacobsz at Leeuwarden, and did not apply to Rembrandt much before the age of seventeen or eighteen. That he was an independent master before he was twenty-one is proved by his earliest pictures, dated in 1636, among which is the "Pyrrhus" in the Brunswick Museum; and furthermore, by the fact that there existed a law in Holland which prohibited a pupil from signing his work during the term of his apprenticeship. Though Flinck was eight years younger than his master, he yet enjoyed an intimate friendship with him, and in 1637 he painted his portrait, in return for that which Rembrandt painted of him and his wife. He therefore probably married upon the termination of his apprenticeship with Rembrandt. At this time he dwelt with the cousin of Rembrandt's wife, Hendrik Ulenburgh; and a year later, in 1638, when only twenty-three, he painted one of his most remark-

able works, "Isaac Blessing Jacob," to be seen in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam — executed, in all probability, under the eye of his master. Flinck excelled particularly in portraiture, and this became his chief occupation. His picture of the "Regents," dated 1642, may be noted among many other fine works of the Amsterdam Museum. It exhibits taste in arrangement; the heads are living; and it has the breadth of treatment and the glow of color peculiar to Rembrandt. The "Portrait of a Young Girl," which I have engraved, is one of the popular pictures of the Louvre. It is the sweetest face that I have encountered among the Dutchmen, and its expression of innocence is captivating. Her head is decked with flowers. She holds in her hand a trowel, or sand-shovel, of the sort that is popular with children at the watering-places of Holland. It is a life-size bust, 26 inches high by 21½ inches wide, is signed, and is dated 1641. The coloring is rich and mellow, and the treatment of the drapery is peculiarly Rembrandtesque. Flinck had a good reputation at Amsterdam, and in 1652 the freedom of the city was conferred upon him. He had a zest for objects of art, especially casts from the finest antique sculpture, and drawings and engravings by the best masters. He died at Amsterdam in 1660.

T. C.

NICOLAES MAES

Chapter V

NICOLAES MAES

(1632–1693)

Rembrandt's studio seems to have been a mild sort of lotus land for his pupils. Once there they seemed to forget their own individualities, and after they wandered from it they were forever talking about it with the paint-brush. Of the dozen or more of pupils, few escaped the impress of the master mind. The explanation of this is perhaps easy enough. They had not master minds of their own. They were able to receive an impression, but not able to create one. There were a few exceptions to this, however; and certainly one of the most interesting of the exceptions was Nicolaes Maes.

If one looks at a picture by Flinck, Bol, or Eeckhout he is reminded of a something that Rembrandt might have done better; but if one looks at the picture by Maes that Mr. Cole has engraved, he is struck with the fact that this is something that Rembrandt never did, or thought of doing. The subject, the sentiment, the feeling, are Maes's very own; and even the technic, the color, the light, are somewhat removed from the Rembrandtesque formula. Maes was a pupil of Rembrandt, yet he had a mind and an individuality that would not stand in absolute abeyance to another mind. He liked and learned Rembrandt's method, but his cast of thought was not in sympathy with Rembrandt's subject, or his psychological view. He painted many portraits, but his heart was not in the study of the human face. They made up his poorest work, and were probably done to keep the wolf from the door. Smooth, flattering impersonations, hued brightly to please the women, they were remarkably successful in a popular way, and it was at one

time considered a favor to be allowed to sit to Maes; but the work was never other than just passing fair. His portraits do not show the true feeling of the painter.

It is only in such subjects as Mr. Cole has engraved that we see the poetic side of Maes. A picturesque interior, walls dashed with light and shadow, a figure or two, rich color, and a poetic sentiment of quiet home life, were things that evidently appealed to him. It was a genre of his own, and he painted it best because he loved it best. And how well he saw the character of such themes! How well he felt the simple truth and tender pathos of humble life! Study the "Spinner" for a few moments, the feeling of it, the subject and composition, the bend of the shoulders, the outline of the head, the fall of the sleeve, the cramped hand—particularly the hand—and you will begin to think that Millet might have painted the picture. The same poetry of the peasantry is there. Maes was, perhaps, the source from which it originally sprung. It does not appear in the works of any of his contemporaries. Steen, De Hooch, Terburg, Ostade never showed any such feeling. It is Maes's own, the mark of his individuality that kept him from being a mere echo of Rembrandt, and raised him to the rank of a creative artist.

That he recognized the power of Rembrandt's method and was apt in learning it, is quite true; and yet, even here, he was something more than a follower. Sharp lights and darks, rich tones of of color, forceful modeling, were shown by the master and accepted by the pupil; but they were varied, intensified, newly employed by the latter. The shadows were darker, the light was whiter, the reds were deeper and more brilliant. More and more, as we study his pictures, do we find how different he was from Rembrandt in these features. The haunting sense of something like them seen in Italy comes back to us. The sharp light, the blackish shadow, and that intense red, are characteristics of Caravaggio's art. He got them from Giorgione, and exaggerated them. But how or where did Maes get them? Did his master and his contemporaries learn them from Italian pictures in the Netherlands; or did the Dutch realize that their type of the human form was not fitted in proportions and stateliness for line treatment, and so, from necessity, originated the picturesque treatment, with light and shade, to meet their subject? The pictures of Maes seem to ask these questions, but fail to answer them. They are Dutch pictures with

"THE SPINNER," BY NICOLAES MAES.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

something very like Neapolitan color and chiaroscuro. All of which is further proof that Maes was not swept off his feet by the genius of Rembrandt to his own detriment as a painter.

In composition Maes was very simple, and as a draftsman and a modeler he was very strong. He knew how to give the substance and the character of objects, and he did it with a force second only to that of his master. In light and shade he was violent in contrast at times; and then again he would diffuse light through a whole interior. Some of his shadows are to-day almost black and wanting in depth; while his lights are often quite as arbitrary as those of Rembrandt. He was given to handling sunlight in spots, throwing it upon a wall or a floor, as after him Decamps, the painter of the Orient. He gained forceful effects by these means, but with some loss of truth in tone. This is especially noticeable in his famous ruby red, which, in conjunction with black, he was continually using. Oftentimes his colors "sing," as Mr. Cole observes; but they "sing" falsely, because they are out of key. Again at times they are noisy, flickering, and spotty—made so purposely for effect. The Meulenaer portrait at Amsterdam, and the Godard portrait at Dresden, are illustrations of the flashy play of light in his later style. In them he seemed striving after a jewel-like brilliancy in color, which, when attained, hardly "sang" in harmony with the half-lights and half-tones. In handling he seems to have had two styles; one for the public, and one for himself. His portraits are usually smooth, thin, and of a porcelain-like surface. Even the little genre piece, the "Idle Servant," in the National Gallery, London, charming as it is in color and composition, is as smooth as though polished and rubbed to an ivory finish. His best pictures, however, such as the "Two Spinners" at Amsterdam, are broader in every way, the textures are not insisted upon, and the brush is a little dryer.

Maes knew how to paint, but doubtless the necessities of life often dictated what he should paint. He seems to have made a business of portraiture, and a pleasure of genre. The portraits are too pretty; the genre pieces are too scarce. He painted few life-sized subjects; but the most important of these, I sometimes think, is in the National Gallery, London, under the catalogue caption "School of Rembrandt." It is the "Christ Blessing Little Children," with eleven figures in a group. The subject, the composition, the handling, hardly speak for Maes; but the types, the drawing,

and chiefly the feeling of the picture, are more like Maes than any Dutchman of the Rembrandt school.

In the 1660's, Maes went to Flanders, following the decadent Flemings, and abandoning the Dutch subject and method of treatment. His work after leaving Holland is hardly interesting, and is far from being distinguished.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

NICOLAES MAES was born at Dordrecht, or Dort (where also Aelbert Cuyp, Ferdinand Bol, and Godfried Schalcken first saw the light), in the year 1632 — the year in which Rembrandt produced his famous "Anatomical Lesson." He entered the great artist's studio in 1650, when he was eighteen years old, remaining under Rembrandt's influence for four years, during which time it is conjectured that his best works were produced.

Nicolaes Maes was a veritable prodigy in art at the age of sixteen, having at this tender age painted "Le Bénédicité," a work so fine that it holds its own among the best creations of the Dutch school. His best work belongs to his very early years, but it is not known who were his early instructors. He left Rembrandt equipped as a painter of portraits, and, confining himself to this branch, soon after abandoned that of genre-painting, in which course, however, the true path of his genius lay. He does not seem to have been aware of this; or, if so, he wilfully shut his eyes to the truth from worldly considerations. It was at a time when Rembrandt had lost favor, and such portrait-painters as Van der Helst and Dirk Hals were the lions of the day. Maes may have been desirous of emulating these fashionable painters. About 1660 he went to Antwerp, where the Flemish school was rapidly declining, and the field was comparatively clear. Jordaens and Teniers were then almost the only survivors of the great days of the art of Flanders. On visiting the studio of Jordaens, he was questioned by that artist as to what manner of painting he practised, and replied, "I am but a portrait-painter." There seems to be a note of regret in this, a momentary reflection of his earlier and more poetical days. He remained at Antwerp upward of eighteen years, and became, it was said, a "most successful portrait-painter." He abandoned the good manner of his master, and took up with the prevailing Frenchified taste that was then becoming the style; and so great became the deterioration in his work that it has been supposed that portraits of more recent date are not by the same artist, but are the performances of some other Maes, a name not at all uncommon in Holland.

During his lifetime, and until the end of the last century, Maes was chiefly known as a portrait-painter; but his reputation now rests upon his few superb little pictures of every-day life. We are touched with emotions of tenderness on glancing at such subjects as the "Dutch Housewife" of the National Gallery, London, in which an old woman is silently engaged in scraping a parsnip, while a child, standing near by, is intently watching the operation. It is charming in its felicitous rendering of a trait of childhood. Or we are moved to solemnity in presence of his "Grace before a Meal," a remarkably fine work, in which an aged

housewife, all alone save for the society of her cat, with head raised and eyes closed, is giving thanks before a simple repast. This is in the Ryks Museum of Amsterdam, where there are also two other powerful representations of similar subjects. Both are spinners; one of them I have chosen to engrave, not as being the better of the two,—for I could not choose between them,—but because its color is better preserved. Most of the works of Maes have darkened much by time; but this little gem, for some unaccountable reason, seems to have retained its pristine freshness and purity. Then, too, being oblong, it is better suited to the shape of the page, a consideration not to be lost sight of in making our selections.

This little "Spinner" is painted on wood, and measures sixteen inches and one fourth high by thirteen inches and three eighths wide. It unites subtlety of chiaroscuro, vigorous coloring, and great mastery in handling, with that true finish which never becomes trivial. There is a high note of color in the rich and glowing red of the sleeves of the old woman, which illuminates the whole in a delightful way, and to which, as a culminating point, the harmonies of the surrounding tints, the warm depth of the background, the yellow of the wooden floor, the brown of the spinning-wheel, the richer and deeper hue of the skirt below, the brighter color of the red earthen jar, and the fine mellow tones of the flesh, all lead up. It is this final and glowing touch of red that makes the whole thing "sing," to use a studio word. There is a fine touch of warm blue introduced in a bit of drapery that falls over the bench of the wheel: and the whites of the apron and of the kerchief about the neck are of a very fine neutral shade in the half-lights. I like the action of the figure—its absorbed attentiveness, so simple, natural, and unaffected. Here we see an experienced Dutch housewife—a robust and beautiful old woman, and a type of her time; one of those kind, hale, thrifty souls whose mere presence breathes a sense of homeliness and serenity. Nothing, surely, could be finer than the breadth and simplicity with which the features are indicated. Only a consummate master could attack such difficulties with the ease and suppleness of handling, and the exquisite delicacy and solidity of touch, that contribute to the charm and delight of this work.

In his "Reverie"—a life-size in the Ryks Museum—a beautiful girl leans from a window, gazing into vacancy, quite lost in delicious oblivion of the beholder. She is in the heyday of youth, and it is easy to see that she is dreaming of her lover. In the Louvre there is a work of quite opposite character, equally beautiful in sentiment, however, though more touching in its pathos; it is the only one possessed by that gallery. This is called "Le Bénédicité," and is the one I have referred to as being the work of a lad of sixteen years. It is in the La Caze collection, and is an oblong picture twenty-two inches high by sixteen wide, disclosing a charming Dutch interior in which an old woman, all alone, sits before a midday meal in the act of silent prayer. The arrangement is perfect. The light falls softly from an upper window,—which is out of the picture,—illuminating the principal figure and the table, which is simply laid with the loaf of bread, the cheese, the plate of pottage, and the large ornamental jug, all naturally disposed upon a white table-cloth. Behind the table rises the gloom of a high fireplace, from beneath the mantelpiece of which hangs a string of onions. In the shade of one corner of the room is a spinning-wheel, and a cat curls itself at the foot of the chair in which the old woman is seated.

The painting is of the utmost refinement and delicacy. The color, drawing, expression, and action are above criticism, and the chiaroscuro is really wonderful. Everything displays the most sensitive observation, and a knowledge which for-

gets itself in the sincerity of depicting things as they really are: the modeling of the well-filled surfaces, the solid wall, and the delicacy of the light as it steals gently over it; the forms so firmly drawn, yet melting, airy, made mysterious by the light and shade and play of the surrounding air. It is the patient, religious effort of an unsophisticated youthful genius. Superlative as is the workmanship of this rare piece, it is yet the sentiment pervading it which holds one — the sincere, uplifted countenance of the sweet old woman, so touching in its aspect of devotion, the look coming from the soul within. The light, catching her eye and blurring it, gives to her vision a far-away cast — a kindling of the inward spirit. Her fragile frame, her clasped hands, and her loneliness, raise in one a compassionate feeling. All this painted upon a board by a boy of sixteen! The panel is signed and dated 1648. What a wonderful lad! He was, indeed, a worthy candidate for the tuition of a Rembrandt; but unlike that rugged spirit, he did not continue patiently in well-doing to the end. In 1678 Maes returned from Antwerp to Amsterdam, where he settled, and where he died of the gout in 1693.

T. C.

BARTHOLOMEUS VAN DER HELST

Chapter VI

BARTHOLOMEUS VAN DER HELST

(1613?–1670)

There is no picture in Dutch art over which critics have agreed to disagree so positively and persistently as the famous "Schuttersmaaltijd," by Van der Helst, at Amsterdam. It is an epitome of all the excellences and all the failings of that painter; and it is not surprising that Reynolds, Immerzeel, and Loots should exalt the one, and that Bürger and the French writers should take pleasure in pointing out the other. Perhaps neither party to the disagreement has the whole of truth with it, and perhaps both parties have failed to consider the limitations and necessities of Dutch painting.

It should not be forgotten that Dutch art expressed itself principally in the portrait. The painters handled the single figure; and either their usage or their inclination made it impracticable for them to handle the large, composed figure piece. They knew little about line composition, had just as little conception of a broad light distribution, and did not fully understand what is to-day known as the *enveloppe*, in its application to the large canvas. A many-figured group, with most of the Dutchmen, was a collection of single portraits relieved by variety of pose; but not concentrated by subordination nor united by tone and atmosphere. It was the technical shortcoming of Dutch art, and probably Van der Helst illustrates it in a more exaggerated degree than any other master of the school.

The "Schuttersmaaltijd" represents a banquet of the Amsterdam Civic Guard, given in commemoration of the Peace of Münster, and shows some two dozen portraits of life size on a now

oblong canvas, the picture having been cut down. The individual portraits are excellent. Each head and hand belongs to its body; each pose, and dress, and expression, is characteristic of the sitter. The variety is infinite, and extends to coloring as well as to feature. Given the truthfulness of the separate likenesses, the painter's task would seem to have ended — so far at least as his interest was concerned. It was not the banquet scene that he was painting, but the portraits of the officers. As for putting them all together to make an *ensemble* and produce one united effect, he did not, and probably could not, do it. He evidently did not know how. It would seem as though he had cut out twenty-four single portraits and pasted them on one canvas, so lacking is the principle of subordination, so widely divergent are the different colors and lights, so absolutely contradictory are the values. There is no such thing as one light over the whole group; there is no such thing as one atmosphere surrounding and enveloping the whole scene. Heads in the background protrude into the foreground; figures, coats, and hats fail to keep their distance, and are put in regardless of planes. As a result the canvas is not a united picture. It is a collection of separate portraits; and that is about what its painter intended it should be.

Van der Helst was a portrait-painter pure and simple. He was a successful rival of Rembrandt, so far as popular esteem could make him so; and he is said to have been influenced by Hals, though in just what way his pictures do not indicate. He was the exact opposite of Rembrandt in chiaroscuro, the exact opposite of Hals in handling and light. His work has more resemblance to that of De Keyser than to either of the others; though it is not known that he gained anything from any of these masters. He was chary in the use of shadow, and preferred sharp outline-drawing to the modeled patch. All his drawing was accurate enough, though somewhat precise. Likeness — the characteristic look and pose of head, body, and hand — he doubtless gave to perfection. The threadbare remark, that if all the heads and hands in the "Schuttersmaaltijd" should be cut off and thrown into a basket there would be no difficulty in fitting them on their bodies again, was doubtless an extravagant way of saying that the individuality, the peculiar features of each person, had been well rendered. In color he was not successful, either in the choice of hues or in their arrangement; and he probably had as poor an idea of the values of

"PORTRAIT OF PAUL POTTER," BY VAN DER HELST

THE HAGUE MUSEUM.

tones as any painter who ever thrust thumb through a palette. This is not so noticeable in his single portraits as in his groups, where colors are placed in scattered array, quite regardless of their tone or their relationships. To cover over this defect he very often beguiled himself, and his audience, by the play of light on the surface of gold lace, embroideries, curtains, jewelry, and small still-life. There is great vitality about his faces and poses; but it is not brought out by that verve of the brush for which his supposed influencer, Hals, was so famous. His surfaces are smooth, though not thin or weak; and often he is facile and cunning in his handling of draperies.

Mentally, he was like many another Dutch painter—shrewd in his perceptions but decidedly unimaginative. The influence of Rembrandt's mind touched him no more than the influence of Rembrandt's light. He was not a great thinker, not a man of emotional feeling, not a man of poetic inclination. He was sensitive to a visual impression, and knew how to realize what he saw with considerable truth and exactness. His ability in reproducing the appearance of the external made him a popular painter; and he enjoyed a great vogue at Amsterdam, where some of his best pictures are still to be seen. The most satisfactory of his large pieces is that of the "Syndics of the Arquebusiers," in the Ryks Museum. Of his single portraits, Mr. Cole has engraved one of the very best. It is not only interesting on account of its subject (Paul Potter), but is a thoroughly well composed and well handled picture. There is a startling "Portrait of Admiral Tromp," at Munich, attributed to Van der Helst, which would give one a new idea of this painter if the portrait were really painted by him; but inasmuch as it came from that fearfully and wonderfully catalogued Mannheim Gallery, one is at liberty to believe it was done by De Keyser.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

VAN DER HELST was one of the best known of the Dutch portrait-painters of his time. He was born at Haarlem about 1613, and removed while young to Amsterdam, where he married in 1636, and where he died in 1670. His teacher is supposed to have been Nicolaes Elias, an eminent master in the art of portraiture. He rose to eminence in his art, and was one of the founders of the Painters' Guild of St. Luke. More than this is not known of his life. He flour-

ished at a time when Rembrandt ceased to be understood. He captivated by a realism of treatment and a living individuality of character in his heads, to which was added a coloring undisturbed by any conscientious scruples about values. To understand him in relation to Rembrandt one should see him at the Ryks Museum, Amsterdam, where, in the Rembrandt room, are two of his largest and finest works, hung on either side of the "Night-Watch." These are corporation pictures, representing assemblages of military officers, all life-size. One of these great canvases, called the "Schuttersmaaltijd," represents a banquet given by a company of the Civic Guard of Amsterdam, in commemoration of the Peace of Münster in 1648. It was of this painting that Sir Joshua Reynolds said, "This is perhaps the first picture of portraits in the world." Startling and impressive as this work is at first sight, from its realism, it yet fails to charm because of its want of atmosphere and chiaroscuro. The main object in these splendid groups by Van der Helst is strong and truthful delineation of every part, both in form and color. We note the fine drawing of the hands, so characteristic of each sitter; the clear coloring, and the excellent execution of the details. But the general effect is monotonous and cold. It was said that Rembrandt's treatment of his heads in the "Night-Watch" gave occasion of demur to some of his sitters, because he had not depicted them with the same distinctness as those placed in the foreground. Van der Helst gave no occasion for such complaint, but gave every man his money's worth.

Of the single portraits by Van der Helst, that of the painter Paul Potter is among the most interesting. It is to be seen in The Hague Museum, and measures thirty-eight inches and three quarters high by thirty-one inches and a half wide. It was painted in the last days of his sitter, and shows him still at his easel, with palette and brushes in hand, though in the last stage of consumption. The peculiar sallowness of the complexion is heightened by the rich velvet of the dress. From the palette we can see how few were the colors that the Dutchman needed to produce his marvelous effects.

T. C.

GERARD DOU

Chapter VII

GERARD DOU

(1613—1675)

The name of Gerard Dou is one of the best known in the annals of Dutch art. It is a name that bears a wide, though perhaps exaggerated, reputation; and in artistic rank is popularly placed above that of Terburg, though it does not belong there. Doubtless the deceptive element in Dou's pictures, and the care bestowed in elaborating small details, have contributed their quota toward forming this popular opinion. The belief still obtains in certain quarters that stone jugs, and carrots that look as though they could be picked up, and wrinkles in a face that may be seen through a microscope, constitute the acme of artistic achievement. It is useless to combat such a belief. It springs up, like a live-for-ever, with each new generation.

Dou was a painter who was great in little things. Largeness of view was not a part of his endowment. He saw the world looking through the reverse end of an opera glass, and all creation was diminished to the proportions of a ten- by twelve-inch panel. Humanity, houses, furniture, stone jugs, carrots, and brass pots appeared as minute jewel-like objects, valuable merely for their textures, and the space they could fill on the panel. Nature, living or dead, was to his view a studio property out of which to make a picture; and the object of the picture was never to tell a new truth, express a feeling, or touch a sympathetic chord, but to show how very clever the painter was in doing this basin, or that face, or the other curtain or marble. What the painter's faith, hope, sentiment, or feeling, no one can tell from his pictures. There is hardly a shade of human personality about them. Rembrandt, Maes, Ter-

burg all show themselves in their works; but not so Dou. The subjective element is absent, or at the least apparent only by its absence; and one is justified in believing that the painter never had either a great mind or a great heart. What he did have was a clever, patient hand.

As a young man Dou was taught engraving by Dolendo; afterward he studied glass-painting under Couwenhorn, and finally, he spent three years under Rembrandt learning to paint in oils. Of all Rembrandt's pupils Dou showed the least appreciable effect of the master's teachings. So soon as he launched forth for himself he seems to have forgotten all about Rembrandt's broad manner, and to have gone back to the minute and somewhat mechanical conception of the engraver and the glass-painter. Instead of reproducing the model before him with a graver, he reproduced the fixed facts of nature with a brush. I say "fixed facts," because, though Dou painted figures and sometimes animals, he looked upon them all as still-life, and painted them as fixtures. There is more action in the "Night-School," that Mr. Cole has engraved, than in any other of his works. Motion, he seemed to think, confused surfaces; and Dou was a painter of surfaces above everything else. The marble basin and the brass chandelier, in his "Dropsical Woman" in the Louvre, are just as important to him as the group of figures around the sick woman. He cares quite as much for the one as for the other, and none of them is more than a something to reflect light or color — a something that is characterized by its surface.

If one is prepared to deny the need for human emotion, thought, or feeling in art, — if one accepts painting as a mere report of literal facts, — then Dou must be accounted an artist of rank. He was a very accurate reporter, working in the spirit of a miniaturist, and producing panels that have all the minuteness of a miniature. He was painfully careful that nothing should escape him. The stories told of his lack of success as a portrait-painter because no one would give him as many sittings as he required; of the three days of work on the broom-handle, and the five days devoted to a lady's hand — a day each for a finger — all indicate that he was a painstaking workman in the infinitely little. Time was no more an object to him than to a Japanese worker in cloisonné. Patience and conscientious endeavor were his cardinal virtues. He slaved over parts and their exact meaning; and in the end produced little more than the etymology of art. That he was skilled is quite apparent in his

work. There is no fumbling, or emendation, or feeling of clumsiness about his brush. Doubtless he altered and added much, but this is not visible in the picture. The work looks to be done easily, if carefully. He knew exact drawing, and could compose a picture in a restful manner; he knew Rembrandt's system of lighting, which he found could be applied advantageously to small pictures; he knew color as an agreeable means of telling a fact, if not as a poetic means of expressing a feeling. In textures and small-brush handling he was a consummate master. Add to this a knowledge of materials, and just what they were best fitted to accomplish, and we have the equipment of a first-rate Dutch craftsman — the equipment of Gerard Dou, painter.

The small panel with minute figures was more of a necessity to Dou than to Meissonier. When he tried anything of large proportions he broke down. The "Hermit," in the Ryks Museum, is an illustration of his small method applied to a life-sized head. He was at home in portraying the veining of marble with a single-haired brush; he could out-Denner Denner with the wrinkles of an aged face; and all the minutiæ of a window, a mirror, a candlestick and a young woman holding it, were quite suited to his technic. One wonders if the tale of such trifles is very important in the world's history, or in art history; but that raises again the question of whether true art is objective or subjective. If it is objective, then Dou was an artist; if it is subjective, then Dou was only a skilled craftsman. He was certainly the latter, and if we name him artisan rather than artist, he is still entitled to consideration for the beauty and purity of his workmanship.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

IT was the practice of the Dutch painters, in depicting candle-light effects, to arrange what they wished to represent in a room artificially illuminated, and, retiring to an adjoining room, in daylight, to view their subject through a small aperture cut in the door for that purpose, thus painting the candle-light from nature. Seen, however, in this way, the effect of candle-light would undoubtedly appear darker and redder from contrast with the daylight than otherwise. Nevertheless, Gerard Dou's candle-lights, though showing the influence of this method, are by no means as dark or as red as one might suppose from the foregoing. He evidently modified the ill effect of the sensation received from peering through the aperture, by the impression natural to one when in and surrounded by candle-light at night. His pictures of such effects, though darkened by time, are yet very delightful things to

look at. Their effect of light is remarkable. I well remember, on seeing for the first time the "Night-School" at the Ryks Museum, Amsterdam, how I put up my hand to shut out the light of the candles of the foreground, that I might the better discern the objects in the background, forgetting for the moment that they were not real, but painted, lights. There are five lights in this picture, the furthermost being only dimly perceived in the extreme distance, as though held by some one ascending a staircase. The picture measures twenty inches and one half high, by a trifle less than sixteen inches wide, which is a large-sized one for the artist, whose works are usually much smaller.

Dou was born in 1613 at Leyden, the same town that has the honor of claiming Rembrandt as a citizen. He was Rembrandt's first pupil, and entered that master's studio in 1628. This was when he had attained the age of fifteen years, and had already studied drawing for six years under two other masters. Such was his rapid progress under Rembrandt that three years sufficed to make of him an independent artist. He began by painting portraits, but his manner of procedure was too slow to suit the patience of his sitters, and he chose the path of genre-painting, representing familiar scenes of every-day life. He had an instrument made in which a diminishing-glass was placed, which enabled him to see what he was copying on the same scale as the picture on which he was at work. He made his own brushes, ground his own colors, prepared his varnishes, panels, and canvas with his own hands. He was an enemy to dust, and took every precaution to prevent it from settling upon his brushes or canvas, and with a view to this end he chose a studio opening upon a ditch of water, which in Holland, the land of canals, was doubtless an easy matter to do. He resided principally at his native city, Leyden, where the novelty of his style soon gained him fame and wealth. He received high prices for his works, as all men seem to have fallen in love with them. It is recorded that when Charles II. returned to England, the States-General could think of no more precious gift to present to his Majesty than one of Dou's works, the price of which is said to have been 4000 florins. Such was the demand for his paintings that a wealthy connoisseur named Van Spiring gave him an annual donation of 1000 florins merely for the privilege of the first choice of the pictures that he completed at the close of every year, at the same time paying him the price of the picture he chose like any other purchaser. It is said that he greatly impaired his eyesight by the minute finish of his painting, and was consequently obliged to wear spectacles when only thirty years old. Indeed, the perfection of finish and beauty of workmanship displayed in all his pictures are such that it is a pleasure and an advantage to use a magnifying-glass in the examination of them, for then one can mark the exquisite delicacy of handling.

Dou is said to have been an incessant worker, beginning at the age of fifteen, and ending only with death in 1675, at the age of sixty-two. There are only two hundred of his pictures known in the various public and private galleries of Europe, thus making an average of four or five paintings for each year of his life; yet, considering their microscopic execution, it is remarkable that he should have finished so many. He was buried at Leyden, in Saint Peter's Church, four years before his famous contemporary Jan Steen, who rests in the same place. Of his pupils, Metsu and Mieris are of high renown in Dutch art.

T. C.

"THE NIGHT-SCHOOL," BY GERARD DOU.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

GERARD TERBURG

Chapter VIII

GERARD TERBURG

(1617?–1681)

Two painters of the same school could hardly be found more opposed in art than Gerard Dou and Gerard Terburg. The painting of the one was the exact appearance of reality as near as pigments and a photographic eye could reproduce it, with the man apparent only in the workman; the painting of the other was nature seen by a sensitive eye, told by a most cultured hand, and influenced by as charming an individuality as any in the realm of painting. Terburg was, all told, the greatest of the "Little Dutchmen"—a painter who to-day, notwithstanding his many modern admirers, is not appreciated as he should be. He belongs near Rembrandt and Hals, at the head of the school.

Such a position should be his not by virtue of his skill alone, though he was one of the best of the Dutch technicians, but by virtue of his clear point of view, his artistic feeling, his strong grasp of character and fitness, his winning frankness. Moreover, Terburg had one quality that no other Dutchman, save possibly his follower Metsu, possessed. That quality was culture; and by culture I mean style. The oft-quoted definition, "Style is the man," is but a garbled extract from Buffon; and, as quoted, conveys a meaning just the opposite from what Buffon intended. He meant, by style, the final refinement of thought and method, the sifting and straining of all that is fittest in the local to make up the universal. The power of selection, the ability to discriminate between forms and methods, so that only the best shall be accepted, are its requisites. In itself it is an attainment more than an inheritance, and results from education rather than from natural gift. It is taste refined by

education and experience. This is precisely the quality that Terburg possessed. He was the most cultivated of all his school. In Holland he doubtless studied Dirk Hals and the Haarlemites, Rembrandt and the Amsterdam painters. Then at an early age he went abroad, traveled in Italy, Spain, France, England, and studied the art of the different countries through which he passed. Not a trace of the influence of a single great artist can be seen in his pictures. Leonardo, Titian, and Velasquez never made the slightest puncture in his individuality. Yet he studied them all, digested them all, and while always remaining Terburg the Dutchman, his view was, nevertheless, modified by the views of others. His study produced culture, and his culture produced that selective quality in his work which I have called style. We see it in his paintings as in Raphael's drawings. There is nothing to add or to take away. Everything is well thought, well wrought, and well brought. Of its kind the work is perfect—a wise mingling of the best feeling, the best form, and the best expression.

Undoubtedly Terburg's mind was predisposed by nature toward the refined and the elevated in art. He was an aristocrat in feeling as in subject. In his pictures he never laughs like Hals, or bawls like Brouwer, or simpers like Netscher. His men and women are well-bred, reserved, restful in face and pose; and yet full of sterling character. Easily, silently, undramatically, they work in and upon our susceptibilities. What more Bayard-like people can be found in the picture-galleries of Europe than those portrait heads by Terburg, looking out of their oval frames at Berlin! And, again, what dignity and simplicity of character are theirs! It is just so with his genre pictures. He is so simple with a chair, a table, a wall, and two or three figures, that at first one is disposed to think him lacking in invention; but that very simplicity is his charm. His sense of selection and subordination tells him that a few well-chosen objects are better than a roomful of spotty bric-à-brac. He does not give an inventory of many things; he tells the meaning of a few things. And what character there may be in a chair or table, one may only discover by studying them closely in the works of Terburg. He is not trying to tell anything unusual about them. They do not "stand out," or have deceitful surfaces, or glittering lights. They simply look like a chair and a table in a room. His figures are treated in the same way. They have no pathos or humor about them. They speak only the truth of appearance, a

"THE LUTE PLAYER," BY GERARD TERBURG.

CASSEL GALLERY.

truth without display or mannerism, and yet a truth so profound that it startles us when at last we fully realize it. Nothing but a mind great in its primitiveness could see such meanings in the objects and people of every-day life; nothing but a most cultured method could ever make them apparent to others. Terburg had both of these, and they worked together in such unison, so unconsciously and yet so definitely, that they revealed a truth apparently without effort, and so simple that we marvel at its simplicity. And there in Terburg we have one of the most charming qualities in painting—naïveté.

But naïveté in art must not be construed to mean the boyish or the immature. It is usually the very loftiest mental attainment, the last word of technical maturity. It is to see the essences of things, and to tell them frankly, sincerely, soberly, directly. Turn a moment, now, to Mr. Cole's illustration of the "Lute Player," and see how Terburg has done this. The figure is slight, girlish, ingenuous, artless. The young woman is an amateur in music, and how interested she is! How unconsciously she plays! She is playing for her own pleasure, and has no thought of an audience. Note the bend forward of the body, the eagerness of the face, the half-opened mouth, the nervous hands, the tight clasp of the instrument against the body. The drawing should be examined closely, beginning with the cheek and neck and following down to the substantial shoulders and body under the jacket. Is there not a feeling of form, a sense of substance, and that, too, given with the slightest of means? The push out of the knees, the drawing of the left leg, that runs so naturally and gracefully into the dainty foot on the stool, are they not well shown? Then study the simplicity of that satin gown, the lines of it made by the knees, the edge of it trailing on the floor. Look up a little at the fur-edged jacket, and see how flat it lies in the lap, how simply it is brought around and puffed out at the back by the bend forward of the figure. Could anything be plainer and yet truer? Study a moment the drawing of the chair, and particularly the table, from which the heavy cloth falls in unbroken sweep, save at the corners. Again, could anything be done simpler?

If the drawing is satisfactory, and it cannot fail to be, examine a moment the elements of the composition; the light figure balancing the dark table, upon which the books and boxes are made to repeat the white of the dress, the straight lines of the room and the

furniture relieved by the curved lines of the figure. Then study the relationship of these objects to the background; the distance from the table to the wall, from the chair and the figure to the wall. How exactly Terburg has maintained the value of each object, even to the flat map hanging at the back! How truly the figure is placed so that it neither protrudes in the foreground nor recedes in the background! How omnipresent is the feeling of atmosphere in the room! Look still further at the manner in which the textures have been painted. One can almost see the brush-marks on the objects lying on the table, and feel the heavy woven fabric of the table-cloth. In the figure the textures of flesh and of cloth are equally well rendered. The fur-edged plush jacket, the gold-braided satin gown, are apparent in their surfaces, even in the engraving. We are told that Terburg painted these pictures just to show how deceptively he could render the sheen of satin. If that were true he would be a small painter, indeed—almost as small as Netscher, who painted satin gowns quite as effectively. Undoubtedly, Terburg delighted in working over satin; but is there no other object in its use than to show its sheeny surface? Look again at the picture, and you will see that the figure is a mass of light surrounded by darks. The satin is the illumination of the picture, and Terburg used its scintillating gleam to light up the whole interior. Something bright was necessary to the composition of the piece, and he chose a light dress. If to good drawing, composition, and painting, we should now add a scheme of delicate broken colors, brilliant yet refined, warm yet silvery-toned, clear and yet every note in value, we should have, perhaps, as perfect a piece of workmanship as was produced in the seventeenth century. And this is not Terburg's masterpiece. It is not lofty enough in feeling, or deep enough in sentiment, to show him at his best. It simply shows Terburg's naïveté, his culture, his style.

Terburg was a finished workman. He drew well, handled color well, painted well. In the Salle Carré of the Louvre his "Officer and Girl" hangs near Dou's "Dropsical Woman," and a study of the workmanship of each will disclose the great difference between the men. There is not a trace of the tin-like or the mechanical in Terburg. He is spontaneous, discriminating, selective, where Dou is minute, exact, almost trifling. Dou tells all he sees and knows; Terburg has a reserve quality that suggests great force held in

abeyance. He knows what to give and where to stop, and he does it all so easily, so frankly, so honestly, that we cannot escape the conviction that a master eye sees and a master hand records. Was there not also a master mind back of them? Most assuredly. It is, after all, the mental attitude that makes a work of art. Terburg's mind was charming in its frankness, incisive in its penetration, synthetic in its workings. It grasped the salience of everything, sifted the accidental from the characteristic, and produced the latter in its simple purity. He saw truth of character in the refined and the elegant as readily as Steen in the low and the gross. Nature under his brush became filled with new meanings, for he saw that fitness to a designed end which nature stamps upon all her creations. And there we are around once more at the most virile quality of Dutch painting—character. Terburg's work is an epitome of it. He saw it in a chair leg as in a human face, and he told it in the most refined and cultured manner of any genre painter of his time.

There are few of his pictures left to us, but each one of them is worthy of long study. They are small and unpretentious, with none of the great sweeping power of the Italian pictures. They never touch the austere or the sublime; and have not a trace of the classic or the ideal. They are merely tales of upper-class life in Holland; but they are told with that simple faith and honest belief that make the simplest things in nature of great pith and moment in art.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

THE birth of Terburg, which took place at Zwolle, is fixed by recent discoveries as happening in 1617 instead of 1608, the hitherto commonly received date. Terburg's parents were wealthy, and his father, who instructed him in drawing, was an amateur painter who had visited Italy in his youth. Gerard was soon placed under a teacher in Haarlem,—one Peter Molyn,—and it was not long before he there became a member of the Guild of St. Luke. While still a youth he visited England, and thence set out on further travels, passing through Germany into Italy, where he studied the works of the great Italians. Returning to Holland by way of France, he remained some time at Amsterdam, and probably learned much from the works of Rembrandt.

As he happened to be at Münster in 1646, during the sitting of the memorable Peace Congress, he painted for his own pleasure the marvelous little picture of the "Ratification of the Treaty of Peace," which is now to be seen in the National Gallery, London. After the signing of the treaty in 1648, the Spanish ambassador took Terburg with him to Spain, and thus enabled the still young painter to see what the great Velasquez had done and was doing. In two years he was back again

in Holland, and finally settled at Deventer, where he married, and rose to the distinction of a member of the town council, in which character he has left us a portrait of himself, to be seen at The Hague Museum. At Deventer he passed the remainder of his quiet life, and painted the majority of his works. His death took place in 1681, and he was buried at Zwolle, his native town, in accordance with the terms of his will.

Terburg was the first genre painter of Holland to paint subjects taken from the wealthier classes of society — interiors in which richness of costume and drapery, and of all accompanying details, is rendered with exquisite feeling combined with realistic truth to nature. His pictures, which are among the rarities of European galleries, not more than eighty having been classified, are seldom composed of more than three figures, and often of only one, and represent scenes such as are in general termed "conversations" — parties at cards, gallantries, visits, etc. His ladies generally are dressed in white satin, which material he seemed fond of painting, and no one has ever been able to surpass him in this. The satin robe, indeed, appertains to Terburg. He also painted portraits, generally on a very small scale, and these are full of aristocratic distinction, and exhibit his finest qualities.

T. C.

GABRIEL METSU

Chapter IX

GABRIEL METSU

(1630–1667)

METSU, from his work, for we know little about his life, seems to have been a mingling of Terburg and Dou — the halfway man in art who helped himself from both ends of the line. He was Dou's pupil; he was Terburg's follower. In addition, he admired Rembrandt's work, and absorbed of that as much as he thought wise or profitable. He seems to have been somewhat uncertain in aim in his early years; but later he developed an independence, and showed a good deal of invention, especially in his treatment of the conventionalized interior group. Never a great mind, he never created anything great; but he had taste, delicacy, charm, and a forceful technic that went to the making of an art highly esteemed by the masses, and praised by so great a painter-critic as Fromentin.

Terburg led the way in the fashionable upper-class genre, and Metsu, with something of Terburg's elevated spirit, adopted the same subject, though he occasionally went off to paint common folk and market pieces like the rest of the Dutchmen. His liking, however, was for the handsome interior with rich furnishings and courtly people. These he painted with a delicate sensibility of what was true refinement, as opposed to the tawdry, flash elegance of the painters who came after him. An aristocratic bearing, a well-bred manner about his people, are slight reminders of the art of Van Dyck, though it is not known that Metsu was ever influenced by the Fleming. It was probably his natural inclination of mind, for we feel the same refinement not only in his subjects, but in his manner of handling them.

In composition he had not Terburg's simplicity. He could not see truths so plainly, nor tell them so easily; and so he was not so successful in making a picture out of a chair, a table, and a figure as Terburg. He was more elaborate in every way, without wearying one by catching at many details. His costume was more fanciful, his still-life more frequent, his furnishings — rugs, curtains, windows, pictures on the wall — were more ornate. But there was moderation in all this, and the picture was never loaded with more material than it could gracefully carry. In its arrangement he was fond of symmetry, and was, at times, a little formal in his repetitions of objects. The "Vegetable Market" at Amsterdam, the "Music Lesson" at London, and the picture herewith shown, are illustrations of this repetition. Mr. Cole has called attention in the picture he has engraved to the balance of the glove on the floor by the dog at the left; and I may add that the man balances the woman hand for hand, the boy balances the table, the dish of fruit in his hand balances the vase on the table. Object for object and light for light repeat each other across the picture. This is not by any means disagreeable; it is only a little precise, and dulls the edge of what might otherwise be considered delightful simplicity.

In drawing Metsu was thoroughly trained, and knew how to give the use and meaning of such a thing as a hand as positively as any of his contemporaries. He was particularly strong in his characterization by movements, actions, gestures — something he may have gotten from Rembrandt, though he applied it in his own way to his own people. The inclinations of the heads in the engraved picture are expressive to the last degree. The attitude of the officer, the bend forward of the figure, the pose of the legs, the hand holding the hat, all have direct meanings. And then look at the shy interest of the boy! How characteristic the turn of the head, the movement of the figure! In light Metsu followed Rembrandt's method at a distance, illuminating by spots here and there, but not sacrificing the intermediate notes of color as did Rembrandt. He was a stickler for values (though he never heard the word), and could give the exact light or dark of a tone with as much accuracy as Terburg. The *enveloppe* — the atmospheric setting of a picture — he studied out with rare knowledge, and he was seldom, if ever, faulty in giving the truth of aërial perspective. His color was made up of broken tones delicately blended, with the same silvery quality to be seen in Terburg's work, though he was not so harmonious or

"UN MILITAIRE RECEVANT UNE JEUNE DAME," BY GABRIEL METSU.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

deep in quality as the man he followed. Nor was he so strong or free in handling. Here his apprenticeship to Dou cropped out. The engraved picture is broadly and freely executed, but it is an exceptional work. His painting was usually smooth, slight, and inclined to thinness, with an occasional finical, fussy panel thrown in to remind us of the way pictures are painted on snuff-boxes.

Metsu hardly belongs among the leaders of Dutch painting, and yet it would be unjust to say he was a second-rate man. He was too good a painter to be classed among the miscellaneous followers of a popular movement. He was not, however, marked by any distinguishing excellence that would place him on a plane with men like Terburg. He was in Holland much like Lorenzo Lotto in Venice—not a painter of the highest rank, but one of charm, and one whose works are entitled to much consideration and respect for their sensitive individuality.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER.

GABRIEL METSU takes us into the dwellings of the wealthy and refined, and affords us a glimpse of the elegancies of Dutch life amid sumptuous appointments. We admire the hangings and furniture of the apartments, the walls aglow with stamped leather relieved by ebony frames of mirrors, the great chimney with its sculptured marble frieze and pillars, the brocaded bed-hangings, the richly decorated cabinets and wardrobes, all so daintily neat and bright—fit setting for the fair dames and their admirers, all in rich and rare costumes, and rustling in satins and brocades.

But Metsu, it seems to me, is preëminent among his class in that he subordinates his rich accessories so that they appear but the natural adornments and appendages of his noble and beautiful characters. So perfectly has the artist endowed his beings with personality and life, that we are attracted at once to his interesting personages, and insensibly are led to speculate as to the nature and disposition of their minds. The painting I have engraved is one of Metsu's best works, entitled "Un Militaire Recevant une Jeune Dame," and is full of his finest qualities. What delicate observation of character there is here! This military personage,—a perfect gentleman, albeit a trifle affected in his gravity,—ceremoniously standing and saluting the lady—what an air of quality he has! His jeweled trappings count for nothing in comparison with the courtly dignity and repose that are shown in his whole bearing. And the lady—what a charming frankness speaks not only from her countenance, but from the gesture and attitude of her whole being!

The composition is quite faultless in the arrangement and balance of its parts. To consider well the disposition of the several objects in their relation to one another is an instructive study. There is nothing superfluous or wanting, and everything is adjusted with the nicest taste and judgment. Notice, for instance, how

the glove upon the floor, with the walking-stick above it, offsets the dog upon the opposite side. In the lighting of the figure of the woman, how the strong juxtaposition of the white kerchief about the head and shoulders with the black velvet bodice of the dress makes the background swim! Unfortunately, the picture has been darkened a little by time, though the beauty and refinement of its coloring, and the delicacy of its workmanship, are still a delight.

Metsu was a native of Leyden, and was born in 1630. Gerard Dou is said to have been his early instructor, and already in 1644, when only fourteen years old, he had become a member of the Leyden Guild of Painters. In 1650 he removed to Amsterdam, where he probably spent the greater part of his life. There exist between 120 and 130 of his paintings, scattered for the most part among the public and private collections of Europe.

Metsu died at Amsterdam in 1667, at the early age of thirty-seven years.

T. C.

ADRIAAN VAN OSTADE

Chapter X

ADRIAAN VAN OSTADE

(1610–1685)

From the drawing-rooms of Terburg and Metsu, with their well-bred people, to the taverns and cottage interiors of Ostade and Brouwer, with their coarse boors and peasants, is something of a descent. It should not, however, be allowed to influence the judgment too much. The subject in art has always been with painters a comparatively inconsequential feature. Art consists more in the way an object is seen than in the object itself; more in the manner of telling than in that which is told about. Many things that furnish excellent material in painting are distasteful in the actual presence. Even Troyon's "Shepherd and Sheep," that one would gladly hang in the library, would be hounded off the lawn did they make their appearance there in the life. Just so with the objects of commonplace life in Holland. We may not care for these drinkers and card-players around our tables. They are not clean, or genteel, or graceful; and are better fitted for the kitchen than the drawing-room. But consider how picturesque they may be in art, what fine qualities of color and light and shade they may possess! Consider what truth of character the painter may see in them, for character may make the ugly beautiful and the unlovely lovable. Finally, consider the delicacy of the painter's workmanship. It will never be found brutal, or low, or degraded, or ugly. With these painters of low life one meets with an elevated and refined method of painting that would heighten the glory of a madonna's face and add luster to the wings of an angel.

The chief interest of a national art, aside from its being good art, is that it records a time, a clime, and a people. Of what value is

the work of the Romanized Dutchmen and Flemings who followed the Italians, and tried to produce the grandeur of the ideal? It is a tissue of falsehood, utterly lacking in spontaneity and sincerity. How much better, as more honest, the work of Ostade, who stayed at home and pictured his own kind, painted what he saw before him, and painted it all the truer because he knew it intimately! Unconsciously, perhaps, he gave the likeness of a sturdy people and told the physiognomy of an epoch. He did his part to build up that national art of Holland which never would have been good art had it not smacked of the soil. And those who are nearest to the soil have as much place in art as those born to the social graces. Courbet and Millet and Israels have recently been telling us that truth over again. It is not a political right that any of them has insisted upon; it is a pictorial right. The uncouth peasant in his somber colors, the toper in the ale-house half lost in a bank of shadow and air, the rickety vine-clad cottage with its straw-thatched roof, its weather-beaten surface, its children and animals glowing in color, are all beautiful if we can only get the idea of marble halls and stately Greeks in classic costumes out of our heads. We must get the point of view, else we are hopelessly out of focus and wanting in discernment.

There is certainly nothing eclectic about either the people or the settings of Ostade's pictures. It is Dutch nature with all its beauties and all its deformities, yet put together with an emphasis of the picturesque that tells the artistic eye and the clever hand of a thoroughly trained painter. Many subjects appealed to him, single figures, sacred themes, streets, markets; but he preferred the cottage doorstep with small squat figures, or the dingy ale-house with peasants or topers. The quaint nooks, doors, windows, eaves, stairways, the odd groups, chairs, benches, and still-life, all lent themselves charmingly to composition. He distributed them about on his canvas with a regard for equipoise, he made them brilliant as notes of repeated color, he brought them together and harmonized them under light and shadow. They were the materials of picture-making which he used to the very best advantage. He never distorted or falsified their integrity. On the contrary, he arranged them so that their truth of character would be the more apparent. And in this arrangement or composition he was one of the masters of his kind. One of his dumpy figures, that seems put in a picture at haphazard, if taken out, would soon show a some-

thing wanting; and a change of color in a curtain, a table, or a coat, would mean discord at once. In drawing he reduced everything to the simplest forms, as may be seen in the accompanying engraving of the "Fish Market." The lines of the building, the hat and coat of the fish-monger, the tables, the fish themselves, should be studied. They are all reduced to their elemental strength; yet see what that strength means in the bulk of the figure, the firm modeling of the face and hands, the solidity of the table, the flatness of the fish. It is strength as positive as brush and pigments are capable of giving; and it is so largely because it is elemental. In this feature Ostade reminds us of Frans Hals, whose pupil he was.

There can be little doubt that Ostade was influenced by Rembrandt's light and color. He made a strong central light, and, if it was necessary, he illuminated the sides of the canvas and the background by repeated spots of light. He did not usually sacrifice color under shadow, as Rembrandt did, though he occasionally bleached it in full light, to gain greater illumination or greater relief. His shadows were luminous, except toward the end of his career, when they became dark and often black. His gamut of color was brilliant and yet not flaring. At first he was inclined to steely grays with some sharpness in the treatment; but after 1640 he became warmer in light-browns and golden hues, his hook-nosed boors put on a ruddy look, and he used pale violets a good deal in costumes. Toward the last his color became chilled and opaque. In handling he was not an unworthy pupil of Hals, though he never had his master's great freedom. He used a more flowing pigment than Hals, and was remarkable for what painters call "fat" painting—that is, painting containing lusciousness, depth, and body. He was one of the best of the genre painters as a brushman; and doubtless Jan Steen was largely beholden to him for his dexterous touch, since he was Ostade's pupil.

His pictures are scattered through the European galleries, and one may notice a variance in their quality for which the painter is not altogether responsible. His brother Isack was his pupil, and learned his manner so cleverly that many of his pictures are attributed to Adriaan.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

IT is said that Millet's admiration of the Dutch masters amounted to veneration. A friend who knew intimately the great peasant painter showed me an etching by Ostade from which it is plain to see that Millet borrowed somewhat for his famous picture of "The Angelus"; for Ostade, like Millet, painted scenes taken from the ordinary peasant life of his neighborhood. The etching represents a poor peasant family gathered about a frugal meal, and in the act of giving thanks; from the simple treatment, the touching sentiment, and the genuine and unaffected feeling, truly nothing could be more calculated to move one with inward meltings of humanity and compassion. Millet held this work in particular esteem, and those who know his "Angelus" will recognize in this etching the original of the young man standing in a devout attitude, holding his hat in both his hands, as well as the charming attitude of the woman, with bent head and clasped hands.

Adriaan van Ostade was born at Haarlem in 1610, and continued to live there until his death in 1685. He was formerly supposed to be a native of Lübeck, to have painted much at Amsterdam, and to have died there; but this is now found to be erroneous. His father, who is said to have been a weaver, was of no inconsiderable standing in his community, and had a family of eight children, whom he brought up in good circumstances. Adriaan was the third, and his brother Isack — who also became a painter of repute — was the youngest. The name Ostade was derived from a small hamlet of that name (now called Ostedt), near Eyndhoven.

Adriaan entered the school of Frans Hals when that master was in the full vigor and practice of his art. Adriaan Brouwer was then also studying under the same master. On the completion of his apprenticeship he established himself in a shop of his own in his native town, where he labored with industry and lived in good circumstances. He had several pupils, prominent among whom were his brother Isack, and, as is supposed, the more famous Jan Steen. In more than one picture Ostade has given us a view of an artist's workshop of the time. In the Amsterdam Museum there is one before which I have often stood; the painter is seated at his easel, while his man is grinding colors in the background. One can feel the atmosphere of meditation and perfect composure that reigns there. The broad, high window, latticed with small panes ornamentally disposed, admits a soft and quiet light, giving a sense of seclusion, and the feeling of a calm and cool retreat from the bustle and glare of the outside world. Above the painter is a sheet distended against the ceiling, to prevent any particles of dust falling therefrom and settling upon his work, for the Dutch painters generally were very particular in this respect. About him are a few objects of use, such as a lay figure, a cast from an antique head, etc. His was essentially a *workshop*, and had not yet assumed the more dignified appellation of studio, nor, like the majority of such, was it arranged for display. This picture shows Ostade at work in his own shop.

In the Louvre may be seen the portrait of the painter himself, with his wife and family of six children, and his brother Isack and his wife — ten very remarkable likenesses, all full-length figures, and charmingly composed, forming a beautiful picture upon a panel thirty-two inches wide by twenty-eight inches high. It is one of his largest works. I have heard artists of distinction speak of this painting as one of the rarest pieces in the Louvre. The black draperies in it are admired as being among the best instances of the

"THE FISH MARKET," BY ADRIAAN VAN OSTADE.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

rendering of this most difficult of colors. M. Charles Blanc, in his "Lives of the Dutch Painters," observes that, although Ostade painted many scenes of tavern life, his own way of life was essentially a gentle and a decent one; in which conclusion one must certainly agree on beholding this charming portrait-piece of himself and family, and especially the kind and honest face of the master, tender and refined, reverent, and more grave than gay.

The "Village Schoolmaster" of the Salle Carré is one of his most remarkable interiors. It is a little picture thirteen by nearly sixteen inches, and is valued at $33,000. The affinity between some of Ostade's interiors and those of Rembrandt have not unnaturally led some writers on Dutch art to suppose that Adriaan worked among the great master's pupils; but this was not the case. He often produces in his pictures those deep golden tones which characterize the works of Rembrandt, while in many of his interiors the lights and shadows are as subtly managed. He is an independent figure, however, and one of the exemplars of the most flourishing period of Dutch art.

The "Fish Market," which I have engraved, is also an admirable example, and hangs, as does the portrait group, in the long gallery of the Louvre. It measures sixteen and one-quarter inches high by thirteen and three-quarter inches wide. It would be impossible to describe its wondrous color — the warm, humid atmosphere and mellow golden light in which it is steeped. It is an admirable instance, also, of how well the master could bind together a mass of shadow and a mass of light, and must have been the fruit of much observation and reflection. In respect to its light and shade, everything is subservient to the man and fish, which receive the strongest lights and shadows, though they are not, like the background, in the sunlight. This is contrary to natural laws, especially out of doors; but this was the law of lighting peculiar to the school.

I once heard an art-critic object to the "Fish Market" on the score of the subject. He doubted whether any lady would care to have it in her parlor, fish being at best an unpleasant thing to have about. But to object to such a picture on the ground of its subject is by no means to show overflowing good sense, but rather a false and vitiated taste; certainly an affectation of refinement, and a want of sympathy which is the most unpardonable of sins in the critic. The sentiment in Dutch painting is always charming and never repulsive, because it deals with light and shade and color. This is in truth its never-varying theme.

T. C.

JAN STEEN

Chapter XI

JAN STEEN

(1626?–1679)

In studying Dutch pictures one is always given to wondering whence these painters got their education. Who taught them that intense truth of representation which seems to belong to the work of each one of the school? What tradition handed down told them how to draw and model? What established formula was the working plan of their solid painting? The more one looks at their work, the less it resembles anything ever done in art before or since their time. There is not a breath of the academic about it. A slated method for "doing" a figure, a robe, a composition; a conventional palette for flesh color, blue sky, or general color-harmony, are things apparently unknown. There is nothing stilted, artificial, or hackneyed in Dutch technic. It is all unique, spontaneous, individual. How did this happen, how was it brought about? Certainly not by following the teachings of any institute. It was the absence of academic law that made individual effort possible, even necessary. Instead of following a rule they followed the model; instead of drawing from a dummy they drew from life; instead of painting unseen heroes in what has been called the "grand style," they painted seen men and women in their own style.

Painters like Brouwer and Steen were, perhaps, among the first to paint an entire picture directly from nature. They practically had no studios. They were tavern *habitués*, travelers from place to place, who set up an easel where they could, and painted whatever they found that pleased them. In that way, working with familiar objects before them — the whole scene before them — they were able to give the characteristic force of the original with that

spontaneity of touch and feeling usually seen in a first sketch. There is no probability that Steen ever took people into a studio, dressed them up, and posed them for a scene. The unconscious air of his characters would indicate that he saw them, and painted them, when they were unconscious. He caught them in the very act. Thus he was enabled, by seeing and studying nature at first hand, to give that sense of reality which is so foreign to classic art, and so familiar in Dutch art; to avoid that hectic flush and hot-house complexion that belong to an art produced under the glass roof of a studio.

Of course, Steen served his apprenticeship at painting like other Dutchmen; but what an apprenticeship in a Dutch workshop meant, aside from grinding colors and preparing panels, we do not know. It doubtless embraced a thorough schooling in materials, in drawing, modeling, and handling. That it ever inculcated canons, or taught methods of seeing or "doing" things, I am loath to believe. It is more likely that the pupil was taught to use his own eyes, for most of the Dutch painters bear witness in their work to individual points of view. Steen knew Ostade's practice as he did Van Goyen's; he was probably a pupil of both of them, and yet in his pictures he was always Steen. He was a Dutchman painting low life for a subject, and yet different from any other painter of low life in Holland. One may wander through the long gallery of the Louvre seeing Dutch pictures almost to satiety, and yet when, at the far end of the line, he comes upon Steen's "Bad Company" picture, his interest is stimulated anew. He finds something absolutely novel, and he is willing to declare that never before in art has such excellence of drawing, coloring, and handling been attained. Steen never could have learned all that this picture tells us in a Holland workshop. No one before him ever did things in just such a way. It is his own view and his own method. The picture stands for the individual genius of Jan Steen.

The "Bad Company" shows the painter at his best, and among all the Dutch pictures in that long gallery of the Louvre, I venture to think it is surpassed by none in those qualities that belong to the pure art of painting. The subject is quite in Steen's vein. It represents the interior of a bagnio, with a young gallant in drunken sleep leaning half forward from his chair against a young woman, who leers with a glass of wine in her hand, while a second woman is rifling the pockets, and passing a watch and clothing to an old

hag behind a table. At the back two musicians are playing and grinning. The theme is certainly not elevating; but one forgets it directly he looks at the manner in which it is portrayed. The character of the drawing is masterful, and that is not always the case in Steen's pictures. He was frequently slipshod and careless in hands and arms, which led Fromentin to observe that he sometimes painted after drinking as well as before. But here he is very sure, very marked in the meaning of his lines, very emphatic in giving bulk and solidity. The limpness of the young man, the half-intoxicated sway of the young woman, the arm of the woman at the left, the clothing, chairs, floor, cabinet, background, are all superbly characterized. And Steen was just as clever in composition as Ostade, and more varied. He knit and wove objects together in a wonderful woof of tones and colors, until they were all of a piece, united, harmonious. This he has done in the "Bad Company" picture. And what splendid color! The richness of the blues, yellows, and reds is relieved against a deeper, golden-brown background—the tones all simple, transparent, mellow, admirable in their relationships. Add to this a painting as "fat" as Ostade's, and as facile and sure almost as that of Hals, and we have the make-up of as fine a piece of painting as Dutch art has ever shown.

Steen was a workman above all else. He was no poet or preacher, and most of the moral and satirical side of his art has been read into it by kind commentators. He was a man who probably led a pot-house life, and he painted the scenes about him, because they were familiar and accessible scenes. If he thought to preach to, or satirize the Dutch, he went about it in a very blundering way; for he made vice attractive by his beautiful workmanship. What he really thought to do was to paint a picture. Whether it was moral or immoral concerned him little. The subject was something that would lend itself to composition, light, and color, though he liked, at times, to tell a story, as is shown by the picture which Mr. Cole has engraved. That his themes were usually concerts, dances, and carousals only proves that he was fond of action and life in figures, and preferred the gay and animated scene to the tragic or the melodramatic.

He painted a great many pictures, which fact has been used as argument against the old-time tradition that he was a drunkard. Whether he was or was not need not now be discussed. He is to

us only a fine painter, who sometimes fell below his own standard, and painted carelessly and hastily. Perhaps many of his poorer pictures, in which his drawing is slovenly, his color hot, and his brush-work uncertain, were done with a bleared eye and an unsteady hand, but there is no proof of this; and inequality is just as apparent in other painters about whom no sad-dog tales have been told. Judged at his best—and every painter is entitled to be so judged—Steen was an artist of remarkable skill in drawing, coloring, and handling. No one of the "Little Dutchmen" was quite like him, and no one of them can be ranked above him. His best pictures, aside from the "Bad Company," are in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, though there are other good examples of him in England and in Germany.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

THERE is a portrait of Jan Steen, by himself, in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, which is impressive. It is a strong, handsome, and refined face, three-quarter view; his eyes are turned toward the beholder, who is confronted with a highly intellectual, serious, and almost stern countenance, the very reverse of the drunken profligate and roistering idler he is represented to have been by early chroniclers. Happily, all writers are now agreed in denouncing the great injustice done him by his former biographers. A glance, however, at this sober visage, with its eyebrows partly knit, as if in grave rebuke of his falsifiers, is all the proof one needs in vindication of his character, even if we were not aware that he painted upward of five hundred pictures, most of which are of rare merit, during the short thirty-odd years of his working life. That so incessant and assiduous a toiler could yet find time to mingle with the jovial and the bibulous is an evidence of the soundness of his heart, rather than of any moral defect.

Steen was born at Leyden in 1626, nineteen years after his kinsman Rembrandt, and, displaying precocious talent for drawing, was early placed under one Nicolaus Knüpfer, a German painter at Utrecht. After this he is supposed to have gone to Haarlem, and to have entered the studio of Adriaan van Ostade. Steen's last master was Van Goyen, of The Hague, whose daughter, Margaretha, he married there in 1649; he had been enrolled in the Painters' Guild at Leyden in the previous year. From this period till 1672, when many of his best works were painted, he divided his time between Harlem, Leyden, and The Hague. One of his late biographers, M. Van der Willigen, has found at Haarlem the records of the birth and early burial there of an infant daughter in 1662, and of the burial of his wife there in 1669, and another record to the effect that poor Steen had some of his pictures seized and sold by an apothecary in payment of a debt of "10 florins, 5 sous, and 8 deniers," contracted for medicine during his wife's illness. The same writer tells us that Steen agreed to give, in payment of one year's rent (1666–1667) of twenty-nine florins, three portraits, "painted as well as he was able," from which we may assume that he did not get very large sums for his work. Three por-

"THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS," BY JAN STEEN.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

traits for twenty-nine florins would be at the rate of four dollars apiece; yet, since he paid only twelve dollars a year for rent, we conclude that the purchasing power of money in those days was far greater than it is now. Many an artist of good standing nowadays would be willing to make a like exchange of three portraits for a year's rent.

In 1672 we find Steen back again in Leyden, where, having obtained possession of some property left him by his deceased father, who it is supposed was a brewer, he applied for and obtained permission to open a tavern at the neighboring village of Langebrug. A year following this he married for the second time, and in 1679 he died, and was buried in the parish church of St. Peter at Leyden.

The picture of the "Feast of St. Nicholas" is one of Jan Steen's best and happiest productions. It measures thirty-three and one half inches high by twenty-seven inches wide, and is said to represent the family of the painter. His father and mother are in the background; his wife, in the foreground, extends her arms to the happy child. The festival of St. Nicholas is observed in Holland, not on the 25th of December, but on the 6th, on the eve of which holy day the children hang up their shoes and stockings, and if they have been good and attentive to their studies, Santa Claus graciously fills them with dainties, while he has as certainly a rod in pickle for the idle and unruly. How much of joy and happiness is expressed in so little space, and how perfect is the arrangement. The general tone of the coloring, as of all Steen's works, might be characterized as brown, of a golden hue, but neutral; nothing could be more subtle, mellow, or refined. There is a rich note of color in the red back of the chair, while the drapery of the background is of a soft, dull, reddish hue, which is repeated in a higher key in the sleeves of the girl. The wall and casements of the windows are of soft, dull brownish tints, and the dress of the crying boy is of a more decided tone of the same, while that of the old grandmother is of so uncertain a shade of brown as to be equivocal against the reddish curtains. The highest note of this color is in the loaf of bread and the cakes. The squares of the marble floor are of golden and brownish tones. The velvet sack of the woman extending her arms coaxingly toward the child is of a rich neutral shade of green, and this tone is delicately repeated in the dress of the old man. The skirt of the woman is gray, of a bluish or purplish cast, and this is repeated in a browner key in the dress of the laughing boy behind her. The dress of the happy child is of a soft shade of ocher, varied with golden and pearly tints. The pail is of a dull leaden hue, and the white draperies are warm and mellow. The colors are so neutral, tender, and harmonious in their repetitions and minglings, that they quite defy any attempt at description. The delicacy of the values, and the atmosphere of warmth and radiance which suffuses all, wrap the whole in a halo of ideality. This, combined with that marvelous sensitiveness for values, — borrowed from nature, it is true, yet wrought from inner feeling, — gives to the work of the Dutch painters that imaginative quality, that "grace and glimmer of romance," without which their realism would be but materialistic, and their probity but the record of dry facts.

Jan Steen is particularly at home with children, and has painted a considerable number of subjects illustrative of the joys of childhood; and no one surely could paint them with a kinder or more loving touch, evidence enough that he possessed a tender heart and much good nature.

On the other hand, among his masterpieces are many scenes of tavern life, of dissipation and debauchery, in which he portrays the very lowest depths of depravity. In such scenes, and others of the quaint humors and drolleries of life, he has been compared to Hogarth as a satir-

ist of the follies and vices of his time. However this may be, there is certainly no affectation of moralizing about him. He forgets everything in the desire to show what is. He enters into his tavern scenes with positive delight, painting them, apparently, for their own sake, rather than from any moral end in view. But it is not necessary to make conclusions about these things.

He shows himself an ingenious caricaturist, irresistibly comic and facetious, in such scenes as the "Charlatan" of the Ryks Museum, the "Oyster Feast," and the "Dentist" of The Hague, etc.; and displays a subtle sense of humor in his many "Doctor's Visits." At the Louvre is one of his latest works, dated 1674, "A Feast at an Inn," painted after he had opened his tavern, and no doubt representing the actual interior of the place; it is valued at 30,000 francs. Pictures such as these have rightly claimed for Jan Steen high fame among the greatest Dutch painters of familiar life.

T. C.

PIETER DE HOOCH

Chapter XII

PIETER DE HOOCH

(1630–1677?)

From his pictures, one might say that Pieter de Hooch had only a slight interest in the intellectual, moral, or anecdotal life of humanity. He used men and women in his pictures of interiors about as he used chairs, tables, floors, and windows. People were to him objects showing line, mass, and color. He never bothered himself to any extent with their lives or adventures, their thoughts or their emotions. He cared for their external appearance—their value as factors in composition.

Yet he was no more lacking in sentiment and feeling because he was not directly interested in humanity as a subject, than Hobbema or Ruisdael, who painted landscapes. De Hooch had plenty of sentiment, but it all went out to the beauty of sunlight and color. He thought light more beautiful than man, and he seldom painted a picture that he did not throw his whole strength upon it. Was this a material aim? If so, then Corot must have been a materialist, for he spent his whole life painting that one feature of light. A painter who tells the beauty of so predominant an element as light, be it in the eastern sky at dawn or on a kitchen floor at noon, is telling a universal truth than which there is none greater.

Whence De Hooch got his love for light is not known. His life is a fog-bank of uncertainty, and his artistic education is something at which one can only guess. Doubtless he took up with the method of Rembrandt at second-hand through some one like Fabritius. There is the same love for shadow masses illumined by bursts of light in De Hooch as in Rembrandt; but the former is more uniform in distribution and truer in tone than the latter. Moreover,

Rembrandt applied his light mainly to the illumination of the human face; it was a means to an end. De Hooch used it to disclose an interior; it was an end in itself. Aside from the general principle of using light as foil to shadow, there was little resemblance between the two men. Their use of color was quite different. De Hooch seldom sacrificed it to chiaroscuro. Occasionally, in a red coat sleeve or a yellow braid, the color was out of tone because he had not hit upon the exact value; but this was error rather than design. Usually he kept it in perfect relationship, giving the true value of every tone, no matter what the illumination of it. Some of his gradations of light, as in the "Interior of a Dutch House" in the Louvre (a different picture from the one Mr. Cole has described), are marvelous in their truth. The tile flooring, in the picture instanced, is worthy of study for its perfect tone and its delicate transition from dark to light. The picture is not so varied in color as he usually painted, but in truth of light it is one of his very best. De Hooch was fond of bright color—its repetition was a feature of his composition—and yet he never allowed its brightness to become thinness, harshness, or sharpness. He was more lustrous than the Scottish Wilkie, yet not so high-keyed; richer than the French Watteau, and yet not so sparkling. His tones (probably obtained by many thin glazes) have a quality deep as jewels and mellow as cathedral bells. Indeed, one might almost believe that De Hooch and Ver Meer of Delft got their palettes from another source than the Holland school, were not some brilliant pictures by Cuyp and Steen kept in mind. It is Dutch color in them all. With De Hooch it seems intensified, perhaps, by the importance given it.

De Hooch's drawing of the figure was not that of Hals, or Steen, or Rembrandt. He was frequently wanting in correct details; but he was seldom wanting in truth of mass, and that was really what he sought to gain. His drawing of architecture, doors, windows, tables, was much better, and was equally effective in giving solidity and substantial weight. In composition he used the round or flowing lines of figures to offset the straight lines of architecture; and occasionally he was bewildering with his short stick-like lines, as in the celebrated "Dutch Courtyard" in the National Gallery, for instance. He had considerable skill in linear composition; but his main reliance was upon an arrangement by light and color. He illumined a rather dark interior by breaks of light coming sometimes sharply from a single window but more often from sev-

"THE BUTTERY," BY PIETER DE HOOCH.

RYKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

eral doors or windows. Across this web of illumination, made by bright light piercing transparent shadow, he wove a pattern of deep rich colors gained from objects placed here and there purposely for their value in light and color. For repeated notes of color, and for effects of aërial perspective, he often arranged his figures on different planes. A group was frequently put in the foreground beside a screen or mantel, while at the back, or in an adjoining room, another group would be placed under a different light. This was a common device of the Netherlands genre-painters. Ostade used it very often, and Teniers, the Fleming, placed great stress upon it; but De Hooch made it the most effective in giving the appearance of atmosphere. As a brushman he was not remarkable by comparison with his contemporaries. He never had the facility of Hals, or the unctuous quality of Ostade; howbeit, he was a better handler than many pictures now catalogued under his name, in public and private galleries, would indicate. He had his imitators, and long after his obscure death their pictures filled the demand that had arisen for his works.

De Hooch must have been a man of lofty mind, even though he was not directly interested in the human face. For, in his pictures, he is so serene in mood, so very simple and unostentatious, so rationally happy in the enjoyment of sunshine, children, flowers, rich marbles, and bright robes. There is never a tinge of low taste about him. Even in subject, though he painted the kitchen and the back yard quite as often as the drawing-room, he is never other than refined. Humble life pleased him quite as much as high life; and he saw beauty in the commonplace with its commonplaceness unrelieved by dramatic incident or pathetic story. Material he may be called, because he was not inventive or imaginative in a classical sense; but certainly no one ever saw or painted the beauty that lies in pure materials better than he did. The world failed to appreciate him in his lifetime, and his was the fate of many another genius of the paint-brush. At the present time his name is greatly lauded, and the few pictures by him now in existence are highly prized.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

MUCH of the meager information concerning Pieter de Hooch is doubtful. He appears to have been born either at Utrecht or Ouderschie, a suburb of Rotterdam, about the year 1630. In 1655 he became a member of the Painters' Guild at Delft, but left that city in 1657 for either Haarlem or Amsterdam, and it is conjectured that he must have died soon after 1677, as this date is the latest on his pictures. The greater part of the pictures (about a hundred) known to be by his hand are in private English collections.

De Hooch is one of the most charming of the Dutch masters. He delights in giving us glimpses of the cheerful and peaceful aspect of the domestic life of the time. One might linger hours before his simple scenes with the greatest delight without tiring of them, and wonder what it is that gives so mysterious a charm to his works. Much of the secret of his fascination is due to his wonderful feeling for light and shade, and his refined sensitiveness for values, though much more, no doubt, to the sweet contentment and love of home that must have characterized a gentle and refined nature. A man must paint what he is. De Hooch is a poet of rare and delicate fiber. No other master can compare with him in the representation of the poetry of light, and in that marvelous brilliancy and clearness with which he calls it forth in various distances till the background is reached, which is generally illumined by a fresh beam.

"The Buttery," which I have engraved, is in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, and ranks among the finest examples of De Hooch, and nothing, surely, could be more delightful. The action of the servant as she presents the jug to the child to sip is expressive of gentleness and endearment; and what could be more charming than the glimpse of the inside room, with its picture, and the casement, and the cushioned chair, and the court beyond in sunlight? How bright and sunny and joyful all this is! It is full of the sentiment of home. De Hooch's pictures are never very large; this one measures twenty-five and three quarter inches high by twenty-three and one half inches wide. There are other wonderful works by him in the Ryks Museum. The Louvre also possesses a fine gem by this master known as "A Dutch Interior," representing a richly decorated room, in which, by the side of a sculptured fireplace, a group is engaged at cards. The rich chamber is flooded with mellow light, which is reflected from the golden stamped leather of the walls, and a charming comfort and lovely mystery pervade. Yet, full as it seems of light, much is kept out by the heavy curtains beyond the card-players, near which a loving couple snatch a stolen opportunity for communing. A page enters noiselessly from another room with his salver, glass, and flask of wine. There is another picture of the same title but a different subject in the Louvre.

T. C.

JAN VER MEER OF DELFT

Chapter XIII

JAN VER MEER OF DELFT

(1632–1675)

Dutch tradition has it that Jan ver Meer, sometimes called Van der Meer of Delft, was a pupil of Fabritius, and, at one time, under the influence of Rembrandt. The same tradition is handed down to us about his contemporary Pieter de Hooch. Undoubtedly there is something in the common style of these men that substantiates, in measure, such a tale. There is an affinity between them which would naturally lead one to infer that their teachings were the same, though whether the teacher was Fabritius or not can only be conjectured.

In subject both De Hooch and Ver Meer occasionally painted townscapes; but they were chiefly devoted to the interior, with light coming in at the windows and illuminating a few figures. It was a subject common to the Dutch genre-painters; and yet De Hooch and Ver Meer handled it quite differently from the others. They were more elevated in feeling, more select in types, architecture, surroundings, more brilliant in color, more transparent in light. But Ver Meer was not so extensive or elaborate in composition as De Hooch, and possibly could not handle a complicated scene so well. He seldom painted a large interior with groups. A single figure in a corner of a room, with a window and sunlight, was his usual theme. The arrangement was simpler, but the mental point of view was not essentially different from that of De Hooch. His concern was for the material and the picturesque, more than for the psychological or the intellectual; and his conception was usually summed up in sunshine, shadow, and color. He saw beautiful harmonies in such things, and he told of them with great vivacity and spirit.

In the disposition and adjustment of objects in his pictures he made some use of line, and usually opposed straight lines to curved ones, as was the practice of De Hooch and others. Deep shadow as a means of composition he did not frequently use. He laid a veil of light and shadow like his contemporaries; but it was thinner, less apparent to the eye, than with, say, Ostade or Metsu. His light was clear, and seemed to have the intensity of real sunlight; and, as a result, his color was bright, with a gay surface quality about it. De Hooch was fond of golden sunlight, and warm, rich notes of red and yellow; Ver Meer's tones, if not opposed, were different. He was fond of all colors, reds and Naples yellow included, and he used them knowingly; but he, at first, preferred a silvery tone, and employed that most unmanageable of all cool colors, blue. A number of his pictures, indeed, have something like a blue *enveloppe* about them—as, for example, the admirable little picture by him in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. We know that Gainsborough, as opposed to Reynolds, was fond of this hue, but he used it (in his "Blue Boy" and elsewhere) purely for the sake of blue as a color. In Ver Meer's pictures one is inclined to think it was used for another purpose. It heightened the effect of light. Ver Meer evidently had an inkling of what the modern impressionists have discovered, namely, that there is less luminosity in white than in blue. White is dead, flat, opaque; while blue, thinly laid, is transparent, vibrant, scintillating. Claude Monet has abundantly demonstrated this in his landscapes, but Ver Meer first hinted at it in his interiors. There was certainly no painter of the time, not even Rembrandt with his sharp contrasts, who gained greater height of light than Ver Meer; and something of it was due to his use of blue.

There is nothing peculiar or personal about either his drawing or his modeling. His line is clear, concise, well-understood, at times beautiful in its simplicity, and his modeling has solidity, strength, and character; but this may be as truly said of any trained painter of the school. In brush-work he was decidedly individual; and yet, if the connection could be traced, he might be thought in this respect a follower of Hals, wide apart as their handlings seem at first blush. He was Hals in little. The same staccato quality, the same quick touch, the same flat modeling, appear in the only life-sized work by Ver Meer now in existence—a somewhat repainted group of figures at Dresden. In the small panels he usually

"PORTRAIT OF A LADY," BY JAN VER MEER OF DELFT.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.

painted, this handling is materially modified by the regard for size, and yet a study of the picture at the Metropolitan Museum will disclose the crisp stroke so characteristic of Hals. This kind of brush-work is peculiar only to the pictures of his first period. Later on he seems to have changed his manner (and something of his blue tone) in accordance with fashionable dictation, and painted a smooth surface with pale, varied colors, as in the little "Lace Maker" of the Louvre, and in the newly acquired National Gallery picture which Mr. Cole has engraved.

There are very few of Ver Meer's pictures left to us, and some of them are not altogether good; but at his best he is a very charming painter, winning as the French Chardin, and just as frank in spirit. He is a poet, but, again, like almost all of the Dutchmen, he is so only in the poetry of materials, such as light, color, atmosphere, and values. It is difficult to make people believe that there can be any fine sentiment about sunlight and color, much less about the composition and atmospheric setting of objects in a room. Yet, in the illustration, the pose of the figure at the spinet, the relation of the head to the picture-frame, the exact value of the Cupid in flesh color, the charmingly drawn little landscape and frame at the left, the white light of the window, the very angles of the room, and floor, and chairs, must have been emotionally felt by the painter when he was painting them. Brush in hand, he must have been stirred by their beauty, in precisely the same way that Sir Walter Scott, pen in hand, was moved by the contemplation of sweet Teviot with its silver tide and willowed shores. Feeling—the mood of mind that breeds images, and transforms reality into a something beautiful—is the essence of both picture and poem. Mere skill of brush and skill of pen are unable mechanically to effect such transformations. Beautiful thinking must accompany beautiful workmanship. When they go hand in hand the total result is poetry—and poetry is art, and art poetry, whether done with the pen or the brush.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

THE little we know respecting this extraordinary artist, long since neglected by historians, but now restored to the honor he deserves, we owe to the researches of a French critic — M. Thoré — who, under the assumed name of W. Bürger, wrote an interesting work on the museums of Holland. Ver Meer was born at Delft in 1632, and is believed to have been a pupil of Karel Fabritius (one of the nu-

merous progeny of Rembrandt). Fabritius dying early, Ver Meer, it is said, proceeded to Amsterdam to visit the studio of Rembrandt. He had been elected as a master painter in his native city before his reputed sojourn at Amsterdam; and in 1671 his name again appears among the members of the Painters' Guild for that year. His death took place about 1675. It is related of him that he was killed by the fall of his house at the very time when Simon Decker, vestryman of the church of Delft, was sitting to him for his portrait — master and sitter, together with other persons, being victims of the accident.

Of the few works known to exist by Ver Meer — scarcely a score in all — but one example bears a date; and this is a life-size work. It is dated 1656, and is to be seen in the Dresden Gallery. It is a canvas of four half-length figures representing a scene at a tavern, and is interesting chiefly as testifying to ease and thoroughness in art.

It is in Ver Meer's small works that he appears as an independent master, and we become acquainted with an artist whose genius is akin to that of De Hooch — a master of robust and refined intellect. I shall never forget the "Milkmaid" of the Six collection at Amsterdam; quite extraordinary in its naturalness, truth, breadth, and reality, without excess, and notable for its brilliancy of tone, harmony, and solidity of touch. In the same collection is also an attractive little piece by Ver Meer representing a row of brick buildings, with people, in sunlight, while through an open doorway is seen a courtyard where some women are washing. This has all the fascinating qualities of a Pieter de Hooch, with possibly a greater brightness and enamel of tone. There are no more charming productions of his than such homely scenes as this.

One of the latest acquisitions of the National Gallery of London is a very fine Ver Meer, which is the subject of the engraving, namely, "Portrait of a Lady," standing at a spinet. It is a small work, measuring about eleven by fifteen inches, and cost the National Gallery £1700. It possesses a very charming and realistic effect of light coming in through the window. The varied adjustment of the spaces in the arrangement of the whole is a study in itself.

In coloring it is softer and more refined than many of Ver Meer's works that I have seen. His partiality for a lemon-yellow and a very deep blue, one would not suspect from this example of his work. The wall, suffused by the warm radiance from without, is a neutral gray of great delicacy of tone, and the gold frame of the little picture sparkles upon this background with pleasing piquancy and realism. The black frame surrounding the picture of the Cupid is nearly the strongest note of color in the whole. I have heard an artist of distinction as a colorist remark that only a consummate master would dare to do this: he referred to the balancing of the masses. The spinet is brown, and the dress of the lady is a warm, pearly gray, the part about her shoulders and breast being of a rich blue, while the seat of the chair is of the same shade. The Cupid is holding in his uplifted hand a clock, the pendulum being just visible as it swings from behind his arm. There is, perhaps, some relation here between Love and the lady in the sentiment pervading the whole — a beautiful lady standing at her spinet, and Love holding the time.

T. C.

JACOB VAN RUISDAEL

Chapter XIV

JACOB VAN RUISDAEL

(1628?–1682)

After studying the landscapes by Ruisdael—the wooded mountains, the dense forests, the foaming waterfalls—one is quite ready to believe that this painter was no such stickler for the local truths of Holland as his contemporaries among the genre painters. The high sky-line, the mountain pass, the blue air, the somber color, are these characteristics of the land of dikes and dunes? Was Ruisdael painting a realistic portrait of the land in which he lived, or was he painting a semi-ideal portrait, got originally from tradition and modified to suit the Dutch taste?

It is difficult to trace home to its source this landscape of Ruisdael. He painted two kinds of compositions. One kind was based on the facts of nature as he saw them in the environs of Haarlem and elsewhere. This landscape was actual, realistic, Dutch, so far as its drawing and arrangement were concerned; but in sky, color, light, it was like his more familiar waterfall and mountain landscape—the landscape with which the name of Ruisdael is usually associated. The model of this latter kind is not to be found in Holland. It has been suggested that it resembles the German and Swiss country, and the conclusion has been hastily reached that Ruisdael had traveled there and painted his views at first hand. Then, again, it has been said that it was the Norwegian country of Everdingen, a country that this contemporary and influencer of Ruisdael had discovered. What Everdingen knew about Norway is told us by a gossip's tale. It is related that "once upon a time" he was shipwrecked upon the coast of Norway, and that during a forced stay there he made sketches of the country, brought them

home with him, and it was from these sketches, borrowed from Everdingen, that Ruisdael made up his so-called Norwegian landscapes. There is no probability about any of these reports. The landscape in question bears a closer resemblance to something seen in art than anything seen in the mountains of Norway; and a sobriquet applied to Everdingen will suggest its possible origin. He was called "the Salvator Rosa of the North." Why? Doubtless because his work resembled that of the Salvator Rosa of the South.

We know that the Dutch and the Flemings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were well acquainted with Italian art. They were especially conversant with the art of the Roman and Neapolitan schools, and Rembrandt's possible indebtedness to Caravaggio for his chiaroscuro has already been hinted at. That Salvator's art was well known in Holland, there can be little doubt. Everdingen shows a knowledge of it. His landscapes are of the same dark, stormy nature as Salvator's. The waterfall, the twisted branch, the lowering sky, the mountains with medieval castles on their heights, even the spottiness of light upon broken branches and tree-trunks, were features common to both painters. Everdingen modified the conception in accordance with his Dutch point of view, and Ruisdael's landscape is still further removed from Salvator's; yet tempered as is this Ruisdael landscape with his own sentiment and local touches here and there, it still points back in its classic composition and semi-ideal character to the landscape of the South.

There is no record that Ruisdael ever went to Italy. It was not necessary that he should have gone there to study classic landscape, any more than it was necessary that Claude should have gone to Greece in order to paint his Arcadian groves. He probably knew about Italian art from samples of it in Holland, and from his contemporaries who were reproducing it. Berchem was the friend who advised Ruisdael to take up landscape painting; and what was Berchem's landscape but that of Italy done over in a northern manner? Undoubtedly, Ruisdael was a student of natural appearances. Many details in his pictures, aside from his Haarlem views, indicate this. But, in the main, his composition was based upon Italian art, and his waterfall and mountain landscape was neither Norwegian nor Dutch, but a composite invention—a mixture of northern and southern conceptions.

But all this concerns us only as it suggests the reason why this

painter was not so essentially Dutch as some others of the school. The main question is: Was Ruisdael's landscape good art? To that there can be only an affirmative answer. It had not the naïve originality of Paul Potter's landscape; neither had it Potter's disjointed hardness. It was not so near the truth of Holland as Hobbema's work; but it had not Hobbema's uncertain flicker and flash. Ruisdael was not bound down to the mere truth of fact before him. There was a good deal of the picture-maker about him. He calculated an effect as decorative art, and in his net result there was a shade of conventionality. Nevertheless, his landscape was remarkable for its soundness of construction, its perfect poise, its thorough completion, its admirable *ensemble.* He composed well, if a little formally. His adjustment of objects was quite classic; his drawing of sky and mountain lines, his repetition of objects for perspective, his angle-lines of trees or rivers or gorges, were all very effective. Sky and clouds he knew and drew correctly as the arched ceiling of his picture (not a frequent virtue in landscape art); and with linear perspective he was more than successful. The latter was a feature of Claude and Salvator, and one of the first to be imitated by the Dutch. Atmospheric perspective was a thing he knew less about, and at times he resorted to something like the scumble to obtain it. In light he seemed to shun a full illumination. Most of his landscapes appear under broken and diffused lights, with a clouded sky and a gray half-tone. This has been set down to Ruisdael's credit as a very fetching local truth, and we are continually referred to it as the type of Holland light. Perhaps the climate of Holland has changed, but certainly at the present time, during the summer months — the months that Ruisdael represents in his pictures — Holland is almost as bright and cloudless as Belgium or France. It is doubtful if Ruisdael ever intended his light to represent a local truth. It was an art truth. He needed it to carry out the grave, deep sentiment of his landscape, and he used it arbitrarily. This is equally true of his coloring. He indulged in a meager palette of grays, browns, and greens, not because it told the color of Holland in the summer season, for it does not. Holland is full of brilliant hues. Van der Heyden, Cuyp, and others, not to mention present-day painters, show them to us continually. Ruisdael knew that full bright tones were about him on every hand, but he chose to discard them. He had a sentiment about landscape that required mournful grays and sad greens for its proper expression, and he

used them arbitrarily, as he did light. Even when he was painting local scenes about Haarlem and elsewhere, he did not change his scheme of color and light. It was the sum of his vision, just as pale light and silvery grays were the sum of Corot's vision. The actual truth was discarded by both men for a truth of sentiment.

Ruisdael's sentiment was worthy of the sacrifice, though the recurrent key of color and light gives evidence of the painter's limitations. He seems to have had only one view, and that a rather gloomy one. The bright, the gay, the sparkling, the animated, did not appeal to him. His life may have been radiant enough, though report says differently, but in art he always leaned toward the sad, the melancholy, the lonely, the mysterious. His mind was grave, sober to the point of despair, yet calm, sustained, full of repose. The mountain solitude, the silence of the deep woods, the hush of the ravine were broken only by the dull roar of water falling over rocks. He transported humanity to the heart of the hills that it might be still and reflect; and he allowed no gay color, sunlight, or blue sky to distract the attention. Everything was pitched in a key of grays, greens, and browns, as though nature herself were sadly pondering upon her own fair garmenting as only beauty for ashes.

This mood which Ruisdael portrays for us has not the radiant charm of Corot. It is a mystic, somber sentiment that holds us by its pervasiveness. Everything is imbued with it, everything is tinged and hued by it. It is nature in a fit of melancholy. Nothing shines out to brighten the general effect. The one mournful sentiment spreads like a veil of sadness from sky to foreground. As a result his landscape is not enlivening, but it is nevertheless profoundly impressive. Artistically, it is told with a singleness of aim and a unity of means significant of power. There is no one feature that protrudes. The whole scene sets solidly in its place, and up and down and across the canvas is one sustained effort. In that respect it cannot be admired too much; for unity in landscape is a feature more difficult to produce than any other. Taken piece by piece and examined for its separate qualities, his landscape shows some want of invention and skill. He draws sharply and minutely, he models thinly, he composes somewhat pompously. His light is wanting in scale, and his color is wanting in register. In handling he has none of the vivacity of Steen, none of the facility of Hals, none of the force of Rembrandt. Brilliancy of touch he does not

"THE THICKET," BY JACOB VAN RUISDAEL.

LOUVRE, PARIS

understand, or understanding it, he chooses to subordinate it to the general effect. The surface is flat and thin in the rolling clouds, in the sharply defined foliage, in the brown earth. For a seventeenth-century painter, in a school remarkable for its masterful workmen, Ruisdael does not cut a great figure. He is acceptable, even satisfactory; but never distinguished.

And, after all, skill of the brush did not vitally concern him. What he sought to portray was a sentiment about landscape rather than a likeness of nature herself. The sentiment was poetic, and what mattered it if he used prose to tell it. The ultimate result was good, and it is upon that ultimate result that appreciation of Ruisdael's landscape must be based. In the part, it is not interesting; in the whole, it is complete, well-rounded, designed with a single purpose in view, and revealing that purpose exceptionally well.

Some of Ruisdael's pictures have darkened in tone, probably because they were based in bitumen; but there are still many clearly preserved examples of him in England, Holland, and Germany. He was a very prolific painter, though he seems to have had very little encouragement. His landscapes lacked in human interest, and were not appreciated by the people of his time. The painter died in an almshouse, and to-day his pictures are placed at the head of all Dutch landscape art, and sell for enormous prices in the auction rooms.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

JACOB VAN RUISDAEL was born at Haarlem about 1628—some say 1630. It was formerly supposed that he was born in 1645, but on the discovery of a picture by him bearing this latter date, it was thought prudent to put back the date of his birth some fifteen years or so. His father, who was a cabinet-maker, designed him for the study of medicine, but his remarkable inclination toward art, evincing itself at a very early age, determined his profession; he produced pictures at the age of twelve years that astonished artists and amateurs.

Of all the Dutch masters, Ruisdael is the most reserved, the least likely to captivate the eye at first sight. He is one of those rare spirits whose inwardness is revealed little by little; a lofty soul, grave, tender, and tranquil, who loved the country, where silent nature ruminates far from the world and its restless eagerness to shine; a solitary rambler, simple, natural, and dignified; a painter of the gray side of nature, as harmonizing best with his own reflective and habitually pensive mood; a lover of mists and clouds, of moist and shady glens, of rocky declivities, and mountains. It has been said of his works that they are the embodiment of

the poetry of melancholy. He certainly shows no liveliness, and in this respect he is singular among his more sprightly brethren. But he possesses a charm which is peculiarly his own — his supreme quality is repose. Before his works one is impressed with a feeling of serenity and profound peace. No one expresses better than Ruisdael the grandeur and amplitude of the heavens; he veils them with clouds, which gratefully temper the light that is delicately diffused in subtle gradations of values. His coloring is gray and cool, somewhat darkish in character, varying from green to slate-color and brown, rather monotonous, but harmonious.

Ruisdael never knew how to put figures of men and animals into his pictures, and for this purpose sought the aid of his fellow-artists Berchem, Van de Velde, Wouwerman, and Lingelbach. Berchem is said to have been his teacher, though Salomon van Ruisdael, his uncle, was his earliest instructor. Hobbema is said to have been Jacob's pupil. Ruisdael was not appreciated in his day, and his great labors did not enrich him. Neglected and obscure, he fell into dire want in his old age; and finally, in commiseration of his distress rather than from respect for his genius, which was hardly suspected by any one, he was admitted to the almshouse of Haarlem, his native town, where he died March 14, 1682.

One of the most imposing and beautiful of Ruisdael's paintings — certainly a magnificent work, before which one might linger unconscious of all time — is the river view at the Ryks Museum, Amsterdam, which will be better remembered as "The Windmill." It is a singularly impressive piece, representing a dead calm before a storm. The mill, with its dark, wide-spread arms, rises high in the canvas to the right, upon the summit of a terraced ground — a palisade lapped by the dark and quiet river. The white sail of a boat, toward mid-stream,—flat, and unruffled by the slightest breeze, and of exquisite value in its relief and in its delicate reflection in the water,—rises softly against the far-off horizon. Above is the wide sky, heavy with clouds, which break as they scale toward the top of the canvas, disclosing the gray blue of the heavens through the watery vapors. All is one harmonious and powerful tone composed of rich neutral browns and dark slate-colors, flowing and melting the one into the other in subtle gradations of shades — all shadow, so to speak, everywhere except the pink flush of light crowning the disks of two clouds high up near the middle of the sky, which is the final gleam of the retiring sun. The mysterious sense of expectancy which is the essence of this work is heightened by the strange light, as of an eclipse, that is diffused over all. I have felt at times that this picture was really the most entrancing thing I had ever beheld.

Equally charming and impressive is the "Gleam of Sunshine" at the Louvre. One is confounded by the beauty and the astonishing quantity of work in this most refined piece. In this, one would say, Ruisdael touches the limit of his skill.

The National Gallery of London, in addition to the many fine works it possesses by Ruisdael, has lately acquired another very fine one, which is remarkably well preserved. It is entitled "A Coast View at Scheveningen," — Scheveningen is a watering-place near The Hague,—and is the gayest Ruisdael that I have seen. The sea is in shadow and the coast in sunlight, while the sky is piled with light, warm clouds. Figures of men and women dot the beach, some shading their eyes from the sun with their fans. Of a piece with this in sentiment is "Le Buisson" ("The Thicket") at the Louvre, shown in the illustration. A bush, tormented by the wind, comes out with great force in the foreground, while the sunlight, which gilds the cumulus clouds, brightens the road where the man and dogs are, and glances along the fence, behind which is a glimpse of the village in the

distance veiled in gray and watery vapors.

In these galleries, where masterpieces crowd one another, one may pause often before a rare piece, acknowledge its beauty, and pass on unmoved. But there comes a time, in the course of repeated visits, when the same picture discloses itself, and fills one with the rapture of a new discovery. Then, in the enthusiasm of the moment, one is ready to attribute to the new-found love every possible and imaginable excellence. Only in this way can I account for such a writer as Michelet, for instance, calling "The Tempest" by Ruisdael "the prodigy of the Louvre." But one might commit the same excess with all of these wonderful works of art; each one seems to tyrannize over everything else during the time one devotes to it.

T. C.

MEYNDERT HOBBEMA

Chapter XV

MEYNDERT HOBBEMA

(1638?–1709)

The origin of landscape cannot be placed to the credit of the Dutch any more than the origin of genre-painting. Both kinds of art were known to the Italians, and to say that Pauwel Bril painted landscapes in the sixteenth century is to invite the statement that Bellini and Carpaccio painted them in the fifteenth century. The Italians, however, never painted trees, skies, and mountains for their own sake, and as picture motives in themselves. They used them as a background for figures. The Dutch, on the contrary, saw a beauty in nature, aside from its being a theater of human action, and so painted it, and, in that respect, they may be said to have practically inaugurated landscape as an independent branch of art, if they did not originate it.

Exclusive of the early men, there were three painters who established the type of landscape in Dutch art— Ruisdael, Wynants, and Hobbema. The last-named was the latest in point of time, and in many respects he was the most mature and talented of the trio. He has been ranked above and below his real master, Ruisdael, according as the views of critics have varied; and, indeed, a good case could be made out on either side. As a painter he was Ruisdael's superior; as a man of imagination he was Ruisdael's inferior. He should be considered by himself; yet a comparison between the two men arises naturally, because Hobbema was greatly influenced by Ruisdael, adopted his style, something of his composition, light, and color; and at times was so like his master that their pictures have been interchanged in attributions. This likeness is, however, more apparent than real, and a closer study of Hobbema reveals

him as quite an independent spirit, though he undoubtedly derived much pictorial sustenance from his predecessor.

Hobbema never had Ruisdael's singleness of aim, nor his sustained sentiment. He was not a man of such large mental caliber as his master; yet in what he saw and painted he seems to have been more original. The so-called Norwegian landscape appealed to him less than the scenes of his native land. Such subjects as quiet woodlands, water-mills with bushes and pools, and here and there a small figure — all of them distinctly Dutch — were more to his liking. He was positive and realistic with such scenes, though he sometimes failed in *ensemble.* Details of foliage led him astray into flickers of light, and the white trunk of a birch so interested him that he often gave it undue prominence at the expense of the general effect. Subordination to an idea or a sentiment, a feature so prominent in Ruisdael, was wanting in Hobbema. He had no very pronounced sentiment aside from a love for quiet, sunlit nature. The master's pervasive melancholy is apparent only in the pupil's color, and that, at times, seems inappropriate to the sunny scenes he painted.

Though Hobbema had not his master's sobriety of view, and cared little for his classic landscape, he, nevertheless, knew his method of composition, and many of his studio conventionalities. He was fond of a symmetrical arrangement after the academic manner, as the engraved picture will show; and in all his large compositions he has somewhat of studied formality. On the contrary, his smaller pictures, like those at Dresden, seem as unconventional as though he had cut off a piece of nature with a window frame and painted it just as it stood. Besides the balanced composition, he often used the diagonal sky line, dividing the canvas into two triangles, the upper portion being given to light sky, the lower portion to dark ground. This was a favorite method of composing with Van Goyen and Cuyp, and possibly Hobbema learned it from the former. And again, he was fond of perspective lines running diagonally toward a distant point where sky and trees and hills converged, like the spokes of a wheel toward the hub. The tree-lines, road-lines, sky-lines of Mr. Cole's engraving illustrate this. In aërial perspective he was not always so effective. He marred the effect of atmosphere by undue detail in distant objects, or by a preternatural spot of light on the ground or on a tree trunk. A careful student of nature, he was a sharp draftsman, and laid in separate leaves against the sky,

"THE AVENUE, MIDDELHARNIS, HOLLAND," BY MEYNDERT HOBBEMA.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.

and drew twigs and branches, with all the hardness of a youthful Diaz. Skies and clouds he knew quite as thoroughly as Ruisdael, and in all the details of a foreground he was precise enough to suit the most exacting truth-to-nature lover. In light he was fond of the sunburst falling on picturesque water-mills, or upon the tops of trees and bushes. He spent infinite time and labor filtering this light through tree foliage, flashing it upon pools of water, dry ground, stones — anything that would reflect it. In this feature I believe he was responsible for the spottiness of Constable in England, and of Rousseau, Dupré, and Diaz, in France. They all studied Hobbema, and from him learned how to enliven the dark portions of pictures with sparkles of light from pools, rocks, broken branches, and small figures.

It seems impossible to reconcile this full sunlight with Hobbema's dull color. His palette was only a little more varied than that of Ruisdael, and he doubtless set it after that of his master. Grays, olive greens, and browns predominated, though at times he struck into a livelier key. His color was not so cold as Ruisdael's, for he based his trees in russet for warmth, and then laid upon this basing the dull greens of foliage. His color had its charm of sobriety, but it also had its lack of variety — its monotony. "The Avenue — Middelharnis," in the National Gallery, would be an almost perfect picture were it not for its slaty grays and its mildewed greens. The composition is unique, the perspective accurate, the atmosphere good, the sky superb in its expanse; but the color is forbidding, notwithstanding it is appropriate to the gray day and the clouded sky that are represented. At Dresden there are some more sketchy pictures that seem to have greater brilliancy and vitality, though they are less important in size and composition. The Dresden pictures, too, show Hobbema at his best in handling the brush. He is freer in touch, fuller in impasto, more solid in modeling, and again he reminds us of Diaz. The skies are brushed in vigorously, as Ruisdael never thought of doing them; the trees are handled in mass rather than in detail, and the sparkle of small lights is not so apparent. It is from these small pictures that we gain the clearest idea of Hobbema's ability and his originality. He was a student of what he saw in Holland, and had it not been for the color influence of his master, he might have given us a more complete portrait of Netherlands scenery than any painter of the school. As it was, though he was wanting in Ruisdael's depth and reserve force, he

was infinitely truer to locality, better in color, and a more versatile painter in every way than that master. Half a dozen cities claim his birth, but they failed to appreciate him during his life. He died in poverty, and his resurrection as a painter is due to the English. Most of his works are in England, and it cannot be doubted that they there had great influence upon Constable, and through him influenced the Fontainebleau-Barbizon painters in France.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

THE landscapes of Meyndert Hobbema were little known or appreciated until about a century after his death, and consequently the details of his life are few and scanty. He is said to have studied under Salomon van Ruisdael, though by others he is believed to have been the pupil of the greater Jacob van Ruisdael, nephew of the former. He certainly enjoyed the friendship and advice of the latter, whose junior he was by a few years, and, as might naturally be expected, his works bear a certain affinity to those of his famous contemporary. He was born in 1638, probably at Amsterdam, though the city of Haarlem, the town of Koeverden, and the village of Middelharnis in Holland are each said to have been his birthplace. He is known, however, to have resided at Amsterdam, and to have been married there in 1668, to which event his friend Jacob was a witness. He then recorded his age as thirty. He died in Amsterdam, December 14, 1709, and was buried there, ending his days in poverty and obscurity, his last lodging being in the Roosgraft, the street in which Rembrandt had died, just as poor, forty years before.

Only thirty-five years ago the best of his works was not valued at much more than thirty dollars, and often the signatures were effaced from them, and better known names, such as those of Ruisdael and Decker, were substituted. Now, however, his canvases are highly valued, and a work which before went begging at thirty dollars would, perhaps, fetch a thousand times as much.

The subject I have engraved is known as "The Avenue, Middelharnis, Holland." The long avenue of straight, lopped trees leads up to the village, in which the church tower is a conspicuous object. It is a faithful and characteristic glimpse of Holland, with its pastures, waterways, low horizons, and expansive and impressive skies. Above all, it is the sky which holds us here; we feel the vastness of the immense vault of heaven. The work is gray and neutral in coloring. It is one of the finest of Hobbema's pictures, and is to be seen in the National Gallery, London. It is on canvas, and measures three feet, four and one half inches high, by four feet, seven and one half inches wide. The date upon it, 16–9, is read by some to be 1689, which would make it one of the latest of the artist's signed pictures.

T. C.

PAUL POTTER

Chapter XVI

PAUL POTTER

(1625–1654)

The name of Paul Potter has been made famous by one picture, and that one not, in all respects, the painter's best effort—the "Young Bull" of The Hague Museum. People crowd about it to-day, just as they probably did two hundred years ago, to admire "the way in which that young bull stands out." Their observation is only too accurate; the bull seems in some danger of falling out of the picture frame; but it never seems to have occurred to the observers that it is not the object of painting to make things "stand out." On the contrary, it has been the aim of painters for many centuries, to make things stand *in*. Landscape does not resemble a convex mirror. To our eyes it is not a protrusion, but a depth lighted by a sun, a recession in space, a diminishing vista enveloped and held together in its parts by atmosphere. Does the picture in question verify or falsify this every-day elementary truth? What is the merit of Paul Potter's "Young Bull?" Has it merit, and is it really famous, or is it merely notorious?

If we analyze the picture we shall find that it is not a picture in the sense of its being a single united impression. It is merely a study of a young bull. The animal occupies the center of the canvas, and around him, above him, beyond him, are accessory objects having little or no relation to the bull—objects lugged into the picture by the ears, for the purpose of filling space. The man, the trees, the hard sheep, and the harder cow, have no more actual existence than the disjointed planes of the distant meadows. The whole composition as a picture is weak, amateurish, almost puerile. One feature only of the landscape helps the bull, and even that

feature is handled without shrewdness. I refer to the sky. The dark of the bull's head has been relieved against a light sky, and the lighter hind-quarters have been placed against a dark storm-cloud. The relief is by contrast, the least subtile of all methods. Yet it served Potter's purpose well. He was painting the portrait of a bull, and the contrast was, perhaps, necessary to emphasize the clear outline.

But what of the portrait itself? Is it as badly done as the rest of the picture? By no means. It is unnecessarily rigid and woodeny, the anatomy is perhaps too sharply accented, the modeling is over-modeling, and the painting is under-painting. It has, however, been praised as a fine piece of patient, accurate drawing; and such it is. There is little fault to be found with it in that respect; yet, perhaps, the praise would better be bestowed upon the final aim and meaning of the accuracy. The painter has sought to give the physical character of a bull; but this character does not necessarily rest in the anatomical drawing, in curled hair, and shining eyes. The details are good, but the bull, as a whole, is better; and it is the wholeness of the character that makes the likeness striking. It is a young bull that the painter has pictured, and we feel his age from his size, his head and neck development, his weight, his general pose and attitude. There is the air and the braggadocio, the alertness and the "smartness" of a two-year-old about the beast. The type and temperament, almost the breeding of the animal, are revealed to us. In short, the impression conveyed is a positive one. We have the characteristic nature of the animal so convincingly presented, the fitness of life so completely justified, that again, regardless of subject, we abandon classic canons of beauty to admire it. It is the same truth of character shown in the animal that Hals and Terburg have shown in the human being; it is the same grasp of essentials so apparent in the work of all these Dutch painters; it is the same clearness of perception that makes all the Dutch work beautiful in its truth of insight. The whole impression is convincing, and it is this impression that people have felt and admired. That they have declared the virtue of the bull to lie in his "standing out," only proves that a general judgment may be right, but that the specific reason given for it may be wrong.

Potter was a close student of detail, and saw the character of single objects with much truth; but he was wofully weak in the pic-

torial correlation of his forces. To refer to The Hague picture again for illustration, he made a separate study of the bull and then tried to transfer it to a landscape setting. He succeeded in the study, but failed in adjusting the bull to the landscape. The cause for this is not far to seek. Potter was a student of art; he never became a thorough master of art. He had not the time to learn his craft thoroughly, for he died at twenty-nine. The "Young Bull" was painted at twenty-two. It shows a young painter who never had an adequate master—a boy toiling along and studying directly from nature, regardless of the art of his brilliant contemporaries. Every touch of his brush speaks the innocent frankness and sincerity of youth; but it also speaks the immaturity, the lack of training, incident to youth. He was working out the technic of painting by himself. Circumstances willed it that he should be a self-made, or rather a self-making man, for the making was interrupted by death. His early taking away is matter for regret, but it should not be a reason for declaring Potter a great painter. He was a great student, if you will, but never a great master. There was hardly one fine painter's quality about him. Some small pictures in the National Gallery, and a notable one in the Louvre, the "Horses at the Door of a Cottage" (painted in the same year as the "Young Bull"), would seem to deny this; but the more one sees of these pictures the more askance he looks at their attributions. Is it possible that the same hand painted the "Horses at the Door of a Cottage," and then, five years later, painted the "Meadow," hanging on the opposite wall? Yet the painter of the "Meadow" (1652) was the painter of the "Young Bull" (1647), the "Bear Hunt" (1649), the "Orpheus" (1650), the "Shepherd and Sheep" (1651) at Amsterdam. It has the same drawing, coloring, and handling; it is just as hard in substance, just as disjointed in composition, just as faulty in light, just as harsh in treatment, as the pictures cited. The year following the painting of the "Meadow," Potter died. Did he ever, at any time, reach the degree of facility, the knowledge of color, light, and atmosphere shown in the "Horses at the Door of a Cottage" and the National Gallery pictures? Potter's name on a picture has always had great value, and it has made valuable a number of pictures never painted by his hand.

Again we return to the conclusion that Potter was an aspiration rather than a consummation. He could draw a cow, a tree, a rock, a leaf with harsh exactness, and he could paint them with a rasping,

wiry brush; but he could not put them together and make a picture of them. He did not understand subordination, atmosphere, values, or picture planes. His compositions begin anywhere, and ramble indefinitely so long as there is canvas; they are illuminated by a light that comes from no point in particular; and their coloring is lacking in unity, depth, richness, and transparency. This was the result of an insufficient education, which he was striving to better with unwearying patience and industry when his life was suddenly cut short. What he might have done had he been spared can hardly be considered; what he achieved under adverse circumstances, together with the noble patience and candid spirit of his achievement, cannot be too highly praised. If we regard his work as the study of a young man devoted to the realistic portrayal of character in landscape and cattle, we shall find much to admire; if we regard his work as final pictorial accomplishment, we shall not escape disappointment.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

PAUL POTTER'S career was of short duration, but the number of works which he executed, and the zeal and untiring energy with which he labored, were extraordinary. He was born at Enkhuizen, a fishing-village on the Zuyder Zee, November 20, 1625, and studied art under his father, an obscure landscape-painter; yet such was the precocity of his talent that at the age of fourteen years he executed a charming etching, and from that time forth produced work upon work. He lived for some years with his father at Amsterdam; then, at the age of twenty-one, he went to Delft, where during two years he painted many of his pictures, including his large work, the "Young Bull." In 1649 he took up his residence at The Hague, where he joined the Painters' Guild, and rose to fame and princely patronage. In 1650 he married, and in 1652 returned once more to Amsterdam, at the instance of one of his chief patrons, the burgomaster Tulp. Here, his health rapidly failing, he died in 1654 of consumption, superinduced by over-work.

During this brief period of not more than fourteen working years, the latter part of which must have been hampered by disease, he produced an astonishing amount of work. His paintings amount to 103, besides 18 etchings, together with numerous drawings and studies, including landscapes, and heads of oxen and sheep in varied positions with difficult fore-shortenings; trees and tree-trunks well understood; carts and plows, and all kinds of farming implements, showing singular precision of design.

The "Young Bull," considered as a piece of portraiture, is doubtless a fine work. It is one of the most celebrated things in Holland, and The Hague Museum owes to it a large part of the curiosity of which it is the object. Though it may not fill all the requirements of a perfect picture, it nevertheless satisfies as a complete and conclusive portrayal of a

"THE YOUNG BULL," BY PAUL POTTER.

THE HAGUE MUSEUM.

bull, and has been rightly termed "The Bull."

In point of execution it is marvelously minute; the single hairs upon the brute's head are seemingly palpable to the touch, and flies are seen buzzing about. This closeness of observation extends to the bark and foliage of the tree, and the grass and pebbles on the ground, where also a toad is seen; yet, although the artist appears to ignore the art of sacrifices, and the fact that things must sometimes be suggested and but half expressed, he does not lose sight of breadth. This work measures eight feet six inches in height, by nine feet ten inches in width, and was painted in 1647, when the artist was but twenty-two years of age.

The Hague Museum possesses a portrait of Paul Potter painted by Van der Helst in 1654, and as Potter died in January of that year, it follows that this portrait must have been completed but a few days before his death. It shows a sensitive and refined countenance, light hair and eyelashes, full, strong lips, and delicate mustache. He is clad in velvet, and sits by his easel with palette and brushes in hand, looking out at the spectator with a serious, determined expression. It seems very remarkable that this should be the likeness of a man wasted with consumption, and at death's door. But it is not more remarkable than his life, which was one of prodigious labor, and wonderful perseverance.

T. C.

AELBERT CUYP

Chapter XVII

AELBERT CUYP

(1620–1691)

I have reserved to the last, not the greatest, but the most versatile of all the Dutch painters—Aelbert Cuyp. He traversed the whole domain of painting, and in all its departments, still-life, landscape, marines, animals, portraits, even historical pictures—for such the "Landing of Prince Maurice," in Bridgewater House, may be considered—he left recording canvases. He was a man of great talent, and painted many subjects well; but perhaps we should have cared more for his art had he painted one subject with superlative power. Nothing that he produced lacks in knowledge and skill; but nothing that he produced has the stamp of great genius. When the human mind spreads wide, we must be content if, at times, we find that it spreads thin.

Though Cuyp devoted himself to all the departments of painting, his Meuse landscape with cattle was his favorite theme, and it is by this subject, more than any other, that he is familiar to picture lovers. His riding-parties, portraits, marines, appear frequently in European collections, but they fail in holding our interest as compared with his landscapes. As for his still-life and flower pieces, it is sometimes doubted if he painted them, and at any rate they are not his best work. The Louvre picture that Mr. Cole has engraved is a characteristic example of Cuyp's landscape,—in fact, one of his happiest efforts,—and in it one may see not only his usual mood of mind, but many of his peculiar methods of working. The conception is one of profound pastoral peace under a warm summer sky, with light clouds heaped up against the blue, and a yellow light flooding down into the foreground. It is a dreamer's day, a day of

golden haze, blowing thistle-down, humming bees, ruminating cows, warm air, and soft shadows. There is no action in the scene; nothing dramatic in incident to break the spell. It is a vision of rest; and the great charm of it undoubtedly lies in the soft light that pervades and tinges everything with a summer day's warmth. That Cuyp painted this light as yellow as the picture now shows us may be doubted. He probably used amber varnish, not only as a surface glaze, but as a vehicle for his pigments, and time has intensified the yellowness of appearance. Aside from this, he was fond of the semi-Italian light of Both and Berchem, and he probably deepened its golden tone for uniformity of coloring.

The composition of the picture seems simple enough, and yet, like all Cuyp's pictures, it is full of subtile perspective lines, reliefs by contrast, and repetitions of objects and colors, all woven together into a single unity with extraordinary skill. The main composition line is a diagonal running from the right upper corner to the left lower corner, and the contrast is that of a dark lower triangle of ground, cattle, and figures, against a light upper triangle of sky and clouds. Perspective is gained by leading the eye from the large man playing the pipe and the large cattle to the small sheep and shepherds on the hill; and again, by receding steps as it were, from the large dark tree to the lighter tower of the middle distance and the two wind-mills of the far background. These large lines, contrasts, and repetitions not only give perspective, but they indicate the great sweep and space of the sky which are so powerfully felt in the picture. Nor does the contrast end with these broader and more apparent definitions. Cuyp seems to have been very fond of offsetting one object by another object, and emphasizing each by contrariety. The large man playing the pipe is a contrast to the small children, the large cattle to the small sheep, the light cow in the center to the dark cows about her, the blue sky to the light yellow clouds, sunlight at the left to storm-clouds at the right. The antithesis is even carried into the coloring and handling, as in the dark precision of the foreground, with its coarse touch upon foliage and cattle, contrasted with the hazy lightness of the background, and the infinite delicacy with which the sky and clouds are painted. That this intricate network of lines, groups, and objects was apparent in the actual scene is hardly possible. Nature is seldom so accommodating to painters. But Cuyp never cared too much about actualities. Nature furnished him with the materials, and he trans-

formed them as he pleased. He was not averse to showing his knowledge and skill in composing a picture, and it must be admitted that his result generally justified his display. The effect of a Holland landscape under sunlight, with expansive sky, drifting clouds, quiet water, and a general air of drowsiness, has been given in this picture, and that was the painter's aim from the start.

Cuyp was hardly so successful with the other subjects he undertook. His riding-parties of ladies and gentlemen — the two promenade pictures in the Louvre for instance — are striking in their blues and reds of costumes; but the horses are somewhat faulty in drawing and action, and the men are curiously self-conscious. The correct pose for an equestrian portrait seems uppermost in their minds. Moreover, the contrasts of light and dark are here too palpable, and the red and blue costumes are hardly true in tone. For portraits Cuyp seems to have had no special talent. He painted people much as he painted horses, sometimes with a harsh brush, and at other times with smooth porcelain surfaces and hard outlines. His marines were much better; and his shore pieces with boats and figures, of which the "Landing of Prince Maurice" is the largest and most notable example, seem directly responsible for the charming pictures of that little understood painter, Jan van der Capelle.

The handling of Cuyp can hardly be summarized, for he varied it continually to suit his subjects. In no case is it exceptionally strong. At times he is rasping, and putters over detail with a brittle brush, as in the foreground foliage of the engraved picture; and then again he is delicate, almost feathery in his touch, as in his skies and clouds. His drawing varies in the same way. Cattle under his brush seem to have a plethora of bone substance, and are remarkable for an emphasis of the skeleton; whereas his horses and figures often run to fatty tissue and abnormal plumpness. He was more successful with color, though not always maintaining its true value. He pitched it in an auburn key for cattle and landscapes, but when painting horses and figures he used a fuller palette. His greatest success was in light, and its distribution over landscape. Here he gave not only the truth of mellow sunlight, but usually its proper tonal effect upon all the objects and colors in the picture. The golden glow of mid-day or afternoon pleased him best; but he also painted moonlights, storm-lights, and in the Prince Maurice picture there is a white light breaking through a mist that is marvelous in its luminosity. Comparing it with the usual mellow

glow of his meadow landscapes brings out again the wonderful versatility of the man.

Cuyp, all told, was an astonishing painter in his knowledge of nature and art. He seldom repeated himself, and when a new picture by him is brought to light, it is new in more than the matter of its discovery. He found and painted something unique in almost every feature of Holland and its people. That such diversity of effort should result in some dissipation of strength was inevitable; yet the wonder is, embracing, as he did, all subjects, that he should have done work of such uniform excellence. He established no new conception, led no new school of art, and yet he holds high rank in Dutch painting by virtue of his versatility, his industry, and his accomplishments. It is not given every painter to be a Cuyp, as David said about Boucher; and though we may prefer the single idea of a Corot wrought to perfection, we need not despise the varied ideas of a more comprehensive mind, though they be less perfect in form and setting.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

AELBERT CUYP was born at Dordrecht, or Dort, in 1620, and not in 1605, as has been accepted until recently. He was one of the first of the school, beginning with its robust incipiency, and living to witness its decline. He died in 1691. By the diversity of his talent he contributed greatly to enlarging the list of those homely observations which characterize the art of his period, and the variety of his subjects makes up almost a complete repertory of Dutch life, especially in its rural phases. He was well-to-do, living upon his own estate, and painting what he pleased and at his leisure, and according to the inspiration of the moment. Taking nature ever as his guide, he rarely fails to impress us by a charmingly naïve conception.

Very little is known of his early life; he was the pupil of his father, Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, a landscape-painter. It is probable that he visited other parts of Holland before beginning to paint on his own account at Dort. He was little known or appreciated in his day, owing to the taste which sprang up at that time for the extreme finish that the works of Dou and his school exhibited. For this reason Rembrandt also suddenly lost favor, and other rare spirits, like Ruisdael, were misunderstood and neglected. Until 1750, the best examples of Cuyp were not valued at more than twelve dollars apiece. The English have the honor of first disclosing him to the world, and consequently England possesses the majority of his works. The engraved example is one of his finest pictures, and is to be seen in the Louvre at Paris. It is also one of his largest, measuring five feet seven and one half inches high by seven feet six and one half inches wide. The temperament of Cuyp led him to seek calm and sunny scenes, and his rare faculty for rendering light, and the atmospheric effects of hazy

"LANDSCAPE," BY AELBERT CUYP.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

morning, of glowing afternoon, and of golden evening, is well known. Dwelling on the banks of the placid Meuse, he delighted in reproducing the warm skies of summer or autumn, and the amber-colored atmosphere that enveloped the surrounding hills.

Speaking of the painting here engraved, Fromentin, in his admirable work on the old masters of Belgium and Holland, has the following:

"No one could go farther in the art of painting light, of rendering the pleasing and restful sensations with which a warm atmosphere envelops and penetrates one. It is a picture. It is true without being too true; it shows observation without being a copy. The air that bathes it, the amber warmth with which it is soaked, that gold which is but a veil, those colors which are only the result of the light which inundates them, of the air which circulates around, and of the sentiment of the painter which transforms them, those values so tender in a whole which is so strong — all these things come both from nature and from a conception; it would be a masterpiece if there had not slipped into it some insufficiencies which seem the work of a young man or of an absent-minded designer."

What these "insufficiencies" are may be seen in the proportion of the children to the shepherd playing upon the pipe, though this detracts nothing from the charm and poetry of the whole. Such, apparently, is the enchantment of the scene that I have come to imagine these little creatures as intended by the artist to represent the genii of the place, evoked by the music of the shepherd, and the harmony of this rarest of occasions, when all nature is attuned.

T. C.

A NOTE ON FLEMISH ART

A NOTE ON FLEMISH ART

I

If it be true that art is the product of its surroundings,—the reflection of the spirit, the thought, the general character of the people producing it,—then it follows that Flemish life must have been different from Dutch life, since the art-result was different in both matter and manner. The contrast between the two countries in either life or art was not clearly apparent at first. In the fifteenth century neither of them was of great political consequence. Flanders was the more important country, the Dukes of Burgundy ruled, and Holland was regarded as an outlying province of marsh lands and fishing-ports. One religion spread over all the Low Countries; and though there was always a demarkation line in faith and character between the upper and the lower lands, yet this line became distinct and prominent only with the Reformation and the subsequent freedom of Holland from Spanish rule.

Once aroused, the Dutch began to show the sturdy, self-contained, independent spirit that was within them. They threw off the Church, threw off the Spanish yoke, and speedily developed a national life of their own. The Flemings tried to do the same things, but they failed. They had less energy, less conviction, less unity among themselves than the Dutch. Their Netherlands blood was not so pure, and there were many interests and influences to change a native disposition. The provinces bordering on France were more than half French, the Spanish and Austrian rulers were Roman, in faith at least; and the whole country was bound to Italy by political, commercial, and social ties. A mixed character in the people resulted from these diversified influences. By birth the inhabitants of Antwerp were allied to the inhabitants of Amsterdam; and some of the stern characteristics of the North were apparent in the whole Flemish stock; but there was much of the volatile

spirit of the South to leaven the lump. They did some hard fighting for independence; but they had not the tenacity, the heroic stubbornness of the Hollanders. When peace was declared they were glad enough to throw down the tools of war and take up the tools of trade. After the passing of Alba the rulers grew lenient; the Church became liberal, worldly, indulgent; and so long as peace and prosperity reigned the people were willing enough to let matters take their own course. The devastated lands were soon restored, the cities were rebuilded, commerce was reëstablished. Wealth accrued from shop and mart, and the Flemish character began to show its true colors once more in luxurious free life, fondness for display, civic fêtes, triumphal processions, and all the hundred and one smaller ways in which a northern people with southern inclinations would manifest its spirit of gaiety.

It is but natural that a commercial, somewhat material people, devoted in its amusements to ornamental display, should admire an ornate and imposing art. Nothing in the Flemish life or character during the seventeenth century required a severe or intellectual art. The rich and sensuous in color was nearer their ideal than the psychological or the ascetic in expression. In this respect Antwerp was somewhat analogous to Venice. A similar class of people called for a similar kind of painting; and, making allowance for national peculiarities, the art-product was similar in its substance, or at the least subserved the same purpose and voiced the same sentiments. It was a reverberation of commercial splendor, luxurious life, and civic magnificence in both places. In character, in national flavor, in decorative liveliness, each art reflected its own people; but in its exact form, its subject, and its setting there were influences directing Flemish art that must be separately considered.

II

The Venetians cared not too much for the Church as a spiritual adviser, and not at all for it as a political factor; yet the Church in Venice was a most considerable influencer of art through its patronage. It was much like this at Antwerp. The Church, always a power there, grew more powerful after the peace; and this rather through popular indifference than popular love. The paganism of the Renaissance was at Antwerp; and while many believed, many

were skeptical or indifferent, or devoted to other pursuits than religion. So, while the people, after their wars, returned to their revels at village kermess or court festival, the Jesuits, with great energy, reëstablished the shaken foundations of the Church. Countless new convents, schools, and ecclesiastical edifices were builded, old ones were restored; and in accordance with the Counter-Reformation policy, these places were made attractive by the splendors of decoration. The Church thus became, as indeed it had always been, one of the largest patrons of painting, and by its orders for altar-pieces and wall-panels gave a direction to the painter's art. It virtually established the subject, the form, and the style of Flemish painting in the seventeenth century. In its use and purpose the Dutch art of the same period was wholly different. The Church was not the patron of painting in Holland. The demand upon the painter's skill came from corporations, burghers, merchants; and his portraits and genre pictures were designed for the private house, the town hall, or the hospital. In Flanders the demand came from the Church, the court, the city; and the painter scaled his canvas, and set his palette, for the large design to hang in the cathedral, the palace, the public hall, even on the triumphal arch of princely parade. For such purposes the style of Terburg, Steen, or even Rembrandt, was neither fitted nor available. It was not large enough in bulk, nor strong enough in line and composition. The minute treatment of the Flemish Van Eycks answered well enough in the fifteenth century; but that there was need for something with more carrying power was early evidenced by Quentin Massys in his life-sized figures of the "Entombment," at Antwerp. Proportion of canvas, expanse of color, composed groups were necessities of the altar-piece and the wall-panel if they would be seen at a distance in large buildings. The Flemings of the sixteenth century must have felt this, and some of their early imitation of Italy was doubtless with the idea of learning the large composition to meet just this need.

We shall not go far astray in believing that the place of setting and the purpose of Flemish pictures were responsible for the form and style of those pictures. The Church dictated the subject and place, but whence should the Flemings get their form and method? The small style of the native Van Eycks had been outgrown; the method of their neighbors, the Dutch, was not yet established. The only painters who had successfully handled the large composi-

tion were the Italians; and it is not strange that the Flemings of the early sixteenth century should have turned to them for instruction. Undoubtedly the Italian imitation that followed, in which whole schools of Flemish painters began reproducing the style of the Italians, was helped along by other aims than the mere desire to fill Flemish churches with properly composed altar-pieces. There was abundance of admiration for the Italian success in all kinds of painting. The Flemings felt the baseness of their form, and turned to Italy to better it, much as the Early Renaissance Florentines turned to Rome and Greece. They also felt the need for fuller fields of color, and again they followed the example of Italy. That they should do this was quite natural; for Italy was the mother-land of painting, the source from which European enlightenment had come, the oracle of piety, learning, and art toward which all eyes were turned. France and Spain were already following her methods, and why should Flanders hold aloof?

It is true that the Flemish result in painting during the sixteenth century was not inspiring. It lacked in spontaneity, in genuineness, in originality. It was too palpable an imitation; and yet a tinge of Netherlands individuality remained in it. Italian method was acquired, but the northern painter could not possess himself of the southern point of view. His eyes were Flemish though his hand was Florentine; and so, perhaps in spite of himself, he produced a native Flemish feeling in his work, clothed, as it was, in the borrowed garb of Italy. The meeting of these two elements, Flemish thought and Italian method, was abrupt and awkward enough—more awkward than the meeting of nature and the antique in Botticelli, and much less original. The product was neither one thing nor the other. Countless pictures were turned out by Mabuse, Floris, Lambert Lombard, the Franckens, and their followers; but they had not enough of Flanders in them to make them true Flemish art, nor enough of Italy to make them good Italian art. By itself considered the product was an odd negation; but in its effect upon the later art of Flanders its influence was very great. It taught the value of Italian technic to subsequent generations, who were destined to make the union of the two elements complete and perfect.

With Rubens and his contemporaries of the seventeenth century the Italian method became better understood, better digested, better judged. There was a modification, an adaptation of the

material borrowed, and an expansion, an amplification of home ideas. The work of Rubens is typical of the harmony of the elements. It shows the full-blown flower of Flemish art — a flower growing on Flemish soil, unique, and perfect of its kind, and yet a hybrid growth, a cross with Italy. The point of view, the spirit, the sentiment, the feeling, are northern. Even the form, the type, the color, the technic, seem native to the Scheldt; but they were based on methods taught in the lagunes of Venice and on the banks of the Arno. Yet the absorption of these methods was quite perfect. One can hardly place his finger on a feature in Rubens's work, and determine with certainty whence he got it. The whole teaching of the Italian school had been filtered through his individuality; it had been recombined, recast, recreated, and then put forth in such a manner that it was impossible to tell where one element left off and another began. The genius of assimilation and recombination, so strikingly exemplified in Raphael, spoke again through Rubens. He it was who not only elevated the Flemish conception, but so rejuvenated the Italian technic that it virtually became his own, and was handed down to his pupils and followers as a distinguishing mark of Flemish art.

III

It has been said that the Church was the most considerable patron of art in Flanders, and that the altar-piece and wall-panel established the character of Flemish painting; but this should not be understood to mean that other forms of art were neglected. The portrait had been from the time of the Van Eycks a desideratum, and never at any time thereafter ceased to be painted. It was the one kind of painting that kept alive the native art traditions of Flanders. With this there was also a painting of landscape and genre somewhat after the style of the Dutch painters. Bril, the Breughels, Brouwer, and Teniers were its most notable representatives. But all this kind of art was inconsequential as compared with the figure painting of panels and altar-pieces. The ostensible aim of the church art was, of course, to tell Bible story, to teach church tradition, to move to repentance by the examples of suffering saint and Christian martyr; but its real aim, from the painter's view-point, was to provide handsome decoration. The religious sentiment and pietistic feeling of early Italian art were no more

apparent in the Flemish painting of Rubens than in the Venetian painting of Paolo Veronese. The subject was only an excuse for the portrayal of beauties of form and color that would hold together well at a distance. In spirit, the whole work was far removed from the pietistic and the emotional. It was worldly, sensuous, splendid. For carrying power the Flemish type, large in bone and muscle, a trifle gross in fleshy development, was used with some exaggeration. The ruddiness of flesh notes, the brilliancy and sheen of silks, satins, armor, jewels, the splendors of architecture and arabesque, were all employed for gorgeousness of color and to heighten the general richness of effect. The Italian composition was freely adopted, to solidify in one piece the different groups, to give dramatic movement, and varied life. The light was likewise Italian—that is, conventional, originating in the figure rather than in the sky. The shadows were rather fragile, rarely insisted upon for mystery, never used in large masses as in Holland, and usually employed only for relief in modeling. The brush-work was remarkably facile, thin over the shadows, loaded in the lights, rarely thumbed or dragged, usually limpid and flowing.

When the painter put aside the altar-piece and the religious subject to do things of a mythological, allegorical, or historical nature, he did not change either his mood or his treatment. He painted with a sumptuous palette whatever subject came to hand. The Medici pictures by Rubens, in the Louvre, were not conceived or executed differently from his altar-pieces. They were wall decorations, and were made to flame with brilliant lights and colors reflected from gorgeous silks and glowing flesh. The decorative sense was always uppermost, without by any means reducing the work to a mere matter of sensuous form and color. There were ideas enough and to spare in the Flemish school; but they made themselves manifest less in the pietistic or literary treatment of the subject than in the work of art as art. The Flemings were picture-makers, like the Dutch; but on a grander and more ornamental scale. True to nature they were, but truer by far to art. A portrait by Van Dyck is true, but hardly so realistic as a portrait by Hals; a nude female figure by Rubens is, again, true, but it does not give so much of the actual presence as a figure by Rembrandt. The laws of picture-making, the established methods of producing grace, rhythm, subordination, unity, are more apparent in the Flemish work. Undoubtedly this was the result of Italian training; yet

it should not be set down as a vice of the school. The reality of nature and the truth of its representation are two different things. Art cannot give the first; and in giving the second, it is governed by laws that vary in proportion to the purpose and the size of the canvas. The small, realistic handling of line, light, color, texture, that might be used appropriately in a panel by Metsu, would appear absurdly insufficient in a large "Triumph of Silenos" by Jordaens. The larger the canvas, the more dependent it is upon the artifices of art.

It might be thought that in working thus by rule, originality and invention would be cramped or stifled; but such was not the case in either Italy or Flanders. What wealth of ideas, what marvels of invention, what variety of technic, the Flemings developed under rule may be seen exemplified in the works of Rubens. A whole century of painters slaved that Rubens might triumph. He was the master of the school, raised above his contemporaries by commanding genius; and often we are disposed to regard his brilliant presence at the expense of his supporters who made his elevation possible. It should not be forgotten that a little way below him in the scale stood the Marlowes, the Massingers, the Ben Jonsons of art, whose lights were brilliant considered by themselves, and were dim only by comparison with the splendor of this new Shakspere of the brush. We should remember, also, that the master was the complete expression, not of himself alone, but of his school, his race, his age, his country. The pictorial genius of the Flemish people made Rubens its mouthpiece; but every painter in the land helped to form the thoughts he rounded, and the eloquence of the winged words he spoke. The triumph of the man was also the triumph of the school and of the whole Flemish people.

PETER PAUL RUBENS

Chapter XVIII

PETER PAUL RUBENS

(1577–1640)

It is not often that nature in her economy endows any one man with an undue proportion of gifts. The fairies who come showering blessings over the cradle are followed by the unbidden elf of compensation, who mixes in an evil to qualify every good. It is rare, indeed, that there is escape from the evil presence; yet here and there in the world's history we find a man whose cradle, by some lucky chance, seems to have been passed over untouched. Such a man was Rubens. About all that nature or man had to give was his. He was well born, well bred, well equipped. Physically, mentally, socially, he was the nearly perfect man. Education trained him, wealth supplied him, every one courted him, genius crowned him. His personal bearing fitted him as the associate of the most noble; his mental gifts made him the peer of the most lofty; his creative energy made him the equal of the most active. Honor, rank, fame, happiness were bestowed upon him. In addition, he was favored by coming to power early, and by passing away while that power was at its height. He never knew decay. The light was suddenly extinguished when its flame was at its brightest, and the European world was acclaiming its splendor. All told, the life was as well-rounded and complete as any in human biography. Looking back at it to-day, it seems to us a model of sound thinking, forceful action, brilliant living, and proper dying.

The well-proportioned character of Rubens, like a Greek profile, is difficult to epitomize, since there is no protruding feature about it. The striking quality of it is not symmetry or outline, but radiance. The splendor of the man is bewildering, dazzling, overpow-

ering. It seems peculiar to himself, and yet it was, in measure, the result of the age and the circumstances out of which he grew. It will be remembered that he came at the beginning of the baroque seventeenth century. It was a time of exaggerated display in all phases of life; and Flanders, like Italy, was feeling the influence of the Counter-Reformation. The Church was putting forth all the allurements of ceremony, embellishment, and processional pomp, to make religion attractive. It will be remembered that Rubens was a son of the Church, though his father had Protestant leanings; and that his elementary education was given by Jesuit teachers at Antwerp. At twelve he was a student of painting under Verhaegt, whose influence upon him was apparently slight. He afterward studied with Van Noort and Van Veen, spending in all about ten years of apprenticeship in Antwerp studios. His last two masters helped in the formation of his thought as well as his technic. Van Noort was thoroughly Flemish, and quite original, in coarse, strong types, brilliant colors, and flashy lights. He was of the soil, with a stubborn individuality and a Flemish assertiveness that undoubtedly left a trace upon Rubens, for we feel these qualities in the pupil. The last four years of his apprenticeship were spent under Van Veen, who was almost the opposite of Van Noort. The Flemish spirit in him was subservient to Italian culture. He had been a student in Italy, and had learned there Italian composition, with such qualities as moderation, selection, delicacy. The teachings that the two different masters stood for were united, amalgamated, blended in Rubens. The spirit of his art was based in Flemish nature, it was inspired by Flemish feeling, it revealed the Flemish point of view, and it was emblematic of the Flemish national life in the seventeenth century; but its structural parts — its composition, light, color, and brilliant ornament — were brought up from Italy.

At twenty-three, Rubens went to Italy to study the art of that country at first hand. What his work was before this time we have slight means of ascertaining; but after the Italian experience, his pictures speak the influences that finally molded his style. We do not know what schools or masters in Italy he liked the best, or what features he assimilated, save from his pictures; and even in these his borrowings are so fused and transmuted by his own conceptions that they are but faintly recognizable. He must have liked Tintoretto's invention and his dramatic action, for he gives us reminiscences of them occasionally; and Paolo Veronese doubtless ap-

"HELEN FOURMENT AND HER CHILDREN," BY RUBENS.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

pealed to him in color schemes and ornamental accessories. At Mantua, where Rubens stopped for several years, Giulio Romano's giant figures in the old palace must have been studied; for some of their exaggeration shows in the Flemish painter. Raphael and Michael Angelo left no perceptible trace upon him; but a follower of Correggio, Baroccio, evidently influenced him greatly in color (particularly flesh color) and in facile handling. During his Italian sojourn, he went once to Spain, and, some time after his return to Antwerp, in 1608, he made trips to France, Spain, and England; but no painter in those lands, not even Velasquez, seems to have attracted him in any way. In 1608 his style was established. He was himself; and though he never ceased to develop and expand during his life, there was no further change.

Such an education upon a man of genius could have but one effect. Where his predecessors of weaker mind were confused by the ramifications of Italian art, Rubens saw clearly; where they fell into a rigid imitation of first one man and then another, Rubens stood up and asserted his own view; where they lost the little individuality they possessed, Rubens held fast to his own, but gained valuable lessons from the doings of others. He learned how to voice Flemish thought in graceful language. It was all that he required; for in pictorial conceptions his brain was always teeming, and he had no need to visit Italy for ideas. When he returned to Antwerp his ability was already known; the Church and the court were ready for him with countless orders for altar-pieces and decorative panels; and he at once took the commanding place at the head of the Flemish school. For thirty years he held this place, and then died full of honors, leaving no great successor. He still stands in history to-day the one great master of the Flemish school.

It cannot be thought that any painter for the Church in the seventeenth century, no matter what his genius, could be quite so soulful, or full of earnest piety, or so simple in faith and character, as one in the fifteenth century. The Renaissance had passed with the Reformation, and simplicity had been succeeded by the affectation and the factitious splendor of the Catholic Reaction. The religious subject under the late Venetians had run into gorgeous pageantry in which religious sentiment was not attempted; under the Mannerists and the Eclectics, canvases expanded, compositions were crowded, colors were heightened, ornament overran all, but again the religious sentiment was lacking. This affected Flanders;

it affected Rubens. It was the spirit of the time, and Rubens could neither avoid it nor change it. All he could do was to paint it; and that he did. Hence we should not be disappointed to find his great Church canvases lacking in spiritual significance. The pietistic painter was dead; the ornate decorator lived in his place. Space had to be filled brilliantly, and the subject chosen or given did not influence the painter's palette. The "Road to Calvary," the "Elevation of the Cross," the "Crucifixion," the "Descent," were just as gorgeous in coloring as the "Adoration," the "Miraculous Draught," the "Marriage in Cana." The sentiment of the subject was not complemented by the coloring. Life or death, pleasure or pain, shame or glory, were, in the hands of Rubens, triumphs of decorative splendor. A flower-like radiance was omnipresent; and at times this became glittering, flamboyant, bizarre. The painter's disposition was one of great calmness, but the taste of the age kept pushing him to the verge of the extravagant. Through haste he occasionally fell into the theatrical in his great contorted groups, or he was obscure in his literary allegories, or, again, he was tinsel-like in color or texture. He had an optimistic Shaksperian mind full of exact knowledge, almost exhaustless in resource, bubbling over with imagination, reflective of sublimity, grandeur, and power; yet when strained to its utmost it flagged, grew weary, and caught at the grandiloquent rather than the grand. He had a hand supremely skilled that could realize the truth of anything upon which it was set to work, one of the most adroit and facile hands in all art history; yet sometimes that, too, grew weary, and ran to volubility and ineffectual bombast. It could not be otherwise. No human being could produce the upwards of two thousand canvases he has left us, without showing inequality in the results. The marvel is, and always will be, how he did so much, and did it so well.

For he painted all subjects for all peoples — altar-pieces and ceilings to please the Church, allegories to please the court, portraits to please the individual, landscapes, animals, still-life to please himself. In each of these he was Rubens, the master-painter, the man who knew how to bend everything to his genius for splendor. His imagination often rose to great heights, his sentiment in matters artistic, such as color, was often deep, his feeling as a painter was remarkable at times in its tenderness; but these, again, gave way before his habitual mood of mind, that conceived life in majestic, Olympian proportions, and hued it with a rainbow glory. It

mattered little whether he painted the religious, the historical, or the allegorical. His subjects, as we study them to-day, seem of slight importance; we are spell-bound and made captives by his great wealth of material, his prodigality of splendor. The large canvas was his preference, and he did not hesitate to say that he thought it best fitted to his talent. It gave him opportunity to ring the whole color-gamut into one magnificent harmony. His smaller easel-pictures were less effective, because more subdued. The portrait gave even less opportunity for display, and he seems to have cared not too much about it; notwithstanding his work in this department may justly rank with that of Titian and Velasquez. Animals, especially the horse and the dog, he pictured with a love for their truth of character; and even where he introduced them in large decorative canvases, they were painted with exceptional care. His landscapes were again the output of a clear eye and a sure hand, sincere in spirit, noble in conception, strong in substance — things done evidently for his own pleasure. Whatever subject he touched made response to his genius; but a man of his colossal mind could appear at his best only in the vast composition and the resplendent color-scheme. They were as much of a necessity to him as the single figure was to Rembrandt.

The type of the human form that Rubens employed was neither Greek nor Italian. It was derived from Flanders, but enlarged and ennobled to Titanic proportions, that it might be in keeping with the size and carrying power of his compositions. At times, it was gross in bone, muscle, and flesh, heavy in weight, bulky in mass; but not ungraceful in line, nor unreal in character. In the drawing of it he was often faulty, or, at the least, the fault is laid at his door, though it is reasonable to believe that it belonged to his pupils. It is well known that Rubens sketched his larger works, but that his pupils enlarged them from the sketches, carried them to a certain point, and then the master applied the finishing touches. One is loath to believe that Rubens could do anything amiss, though he might palliate or overlook an error in a pupil. Certainly the works that seem done entirely by his hand leave nothing to be desired in the matter of drawing. The composition was always the master's own, and in it we meet with wonderful fertility and inventive power. A new arrangement seems apparent in each new picture. He did not hold to any one formula. All the design of Italy he seemed to know, and he turned it to profit without copying or imi-

tating. The "Descent from the Cross" has long been declared to be a derivation from Volterra's picture, and Rubens freely acknowledged it; but this was about his only palpable appropriation. Whether or not he studied Signorelli at Orvieto is not known; but he certainly must have seen the Tintorettos at S. Madonna dell' Orto, and elsewhere in Venice, for he used Tintoretto's diagonal composition in the "Fall of the Damned," the "Elevation of the Cross," the "Road to Calvary," and in other pictures. Moreover, there is a dramatic action about Rubens's pictures, a fling, and surge, and tumult of figures, that remind us again of Tintoretto in San Rocco, and Giulio Romano at Mantua. When painting calmer pictures, Paolo Veronese seems to have given him an idea of dignified grouping and appropriate balances. These were, however, only influences. He had invention enough of his own; and the majority of his canvases are of his individual construction. It is impossible to think of any one but Rubens conceiving them or putting them together.

In illumination he followed the ordinary method of lighting the large canvas — that is, not by light from the sky, but from the picture itself. This lighting enabled him to keep a whole vast canvas in a gay, brilliant key, which was precisely what he desired. Shadow he used mainly as a means of modeling and relieving figures, one against another. The mystery of half-hidden notes, as exemplified by the Dutch, was something for which he did not strive. There is no mystery in his work. He gained depth of shadow by thin, transparent glazes over a white ground. All his darks were thinly laid, that he might gain light from the background by transmission; whereas his lights were the reverse of this. He loaded with opaque pigments like white, and won his high lights by reflection. This was a simple enough process; and Rubens was simple in his means, notwithstanding his results look complex in their variety. The word simplicity applies even to his color, ornate as it appears. It has no great subtlety or shrewdness about it. His harmonies were attained by using colors pleasing in themselves, and by keeping them in perfect tone. In this he was not confused by shadow masses. He struck a high pitch and held to it throughout the whole picture, placing primary colors in such elementary appositions that we often wonder at the result obtained with such means. He doubtless understood complementary colors and the effect of optical mixture, for he relied upon them at times; but his usual method was a more

THE "CHAPEAU DE PAILLE," BY RUBENS.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.

direct adjustment, with dependence upon contrast or accord. The intense brilliancy of his colors was a forceful adjunct of his art, for it gave sharp resonance to the whole. His flesh-color, alone, baffled every one of his pupils and imitators; and his pictures may be told from those of his workshop by this one feature. His golds and yellows are superb in their light, used as a relief to the carmines of the faces; and the reds of his draperies and costumes are astonishing in their depth and radiance. The Medici pictures in the Louvre are just now considered fair game for adverse criticism, because it is thought they were painted almost wholly by Rubens's pupils. Some of them undoubtedly were, but some of them were not. The "Coronation of Marie de Medici," especially the group of the queen and her maids of honor, is worthy of any master of any age; and for richness of color there is nothing better in art than the "Birth of Louis XIII." Let the visitor take the golds and reds in the last-named picture, or the red in the small-clothes of the Dauphin in the picture hanging to the right of it, the "Henry IV. Confiding the Government to the Queen," and try to find their equal in any other picture by any other master, ancient or modern, in the Louvre: and some idea of Rubens's great excellence in color quality will be attained. Color was his supreme feature, and his prodigal use of it only intensifies the feeling of his complete mastery over it. Flesh-color, for example, is usually regarded by painters as something precious—something to be set off and made to shine by surrounding costume. Rubens was about the only painter so full-handed in means that he could afford to place flesh against flesh. He seemed at times recklessly extravagant, a man throwing away opportune effects, but his wealth of resource was so great that he lavished freely and yet never seemed to want.

The impression that we first gain from the work of Rubens is that the painter was headlong, impulsive, furious, passionate—something like a union of Tintoretto and Frans Hals—but nothing could be more erroneous. There never was a painter who made impulse so subservient to principle. He was the deliberate artist in every movement, and could simulate a passion or extemporize a fury without, apparently, a particle of either in himself. The fire and fury of his subject never disturbed the temperance of his execution. Everything was coolly calculated in his arrangement, his drawing, his coloring. He did nothing by mood, nothing by dash, nothing by accident. He knew what was to be done beforehand,

and he did it with the greatest ease and calmness, as though it were merely a juggler's trick. Perhaps no one feature so leads the young student astray as the brush-work of Rubens. Here, he thinks, is the improviser, the man who strikes at white heat, the painter who dashes forward with impetuous freedom. His work, at first, certainly looks to be unpremeditated; but a closer study shows deliberation and calculation again. The long sweep is deceptive; its appearance of spontaneity is the result of training. Rubens knew pigments and brushes by heart. His hand was so thoroughly trained that he could almost model, draw, light, and color with a single stroke. It was not quick-flashing genius that told him how to act; it was years of experience. He thought out everything in his sketch; then, when his pupils had brought the enlarged work almost to completion, the master came in to give the finish. His whole power was thrown on the manipulation of the brush. And that power was something phenomenal. He did not load, or stipple, or model in little hillocks of paint; he allowed his brush to slip thinly, smoothly, flowingly. The only places where he permitted the pigment to thicken or drag were over the high lights. This smoothness in Rubens has often been held up by modern lovers of paint for paint's sake as a sign of weakness, a want of solidity; but if it be considered that Rubens wished to preserve freshness and brilliancy in his colors, and that the real power of his art lay in color splendor, the wisdom of his method will not be questioned. There was no weakness in the man's art, least of all in his brush-work. There never was a more graceful, facile, powerful touch than his; and in this respect alone the world will see another Velasquez and another Hals before it will see another Rubens.

The pictures of Rubens present no marked changes in style corresponding to periods of mental development. His clear intellectuality early discovered the right pathway for his genius to travel, and his whole life was a development along that pathway. As he grew more mature, he became more eloquent in technic, more deliberate in animated themes; but there was no decided change, and never a sign of decline or decay. His work is far from being all of an equal quality. That is due to the fact that Rubens maintained a studio of such proportions that it might not unjustly be called a picture factory. He had many pupils, and more orders than he could supply. Like Raphael, he probably often contented himself with designing, leaving his pupils to execute. Of the hundreds of

pictures passing under his name, many are by his own hand, many are the products of his workshop, some are retouched by him, some are entirely by pupils, and some are repainted beyond all recognition. If we study him in the works wholly of his own painting we shall find him a thinker of great intellectuality, great imagination, great versatility; an artist of prodigious capacity and knowledge; a colorist of vast range, sensitiveness, and brilliancy; a brushman of consummate culture and infinite power. His pictures seem to contain all that is pictorial in the artistic mind, and all that is skilful in the painter's craft. If, however, it were possible to pronounce the secret of their power over us in one word, that word would be "splendor." It seems to be the only word that fittingly describes the life of the man and the art of the painter.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

PETER PAUL RUBENS was born on the 29th of June, 1577 — the festival of SS. Peter and Paul — at the little town of Siegen, in Westphalia, to which place his father, John Rubens — a magistrate of Antwerp — had been relegated in consequence of an offense he had committed against the Prince of Orange. When young Rubens was a year old his parents removed to Cologne, where they remained for nine years, and where his father died. His mother then returned with her son to Antwerp, where she attended carefully to his education. He became versed in the classics and in Latin, and besides his mother-tongue he spoke French, German, English, Italian, and Spanish. His mother intended him for the law, but as he evinced an early passion for art he was suffered to pursue that course. It is known that he had three instructors in art — that he began his studies under Tobias Verhaegt, a well-known landscape painter, continuing them with Adam van Noort for the space of four years, and ending them with Otto van Veen (Otho Voenius).

At twenty-three he departed for Italy, to study the great masters. In the service of Duke Vincenzo Gonzago of Mantua, an enthusiastic patron of the fine arts, he visited Venice, Florence, Rome, and Genoa, copying important works. The Duke, discovering the variety and richness of his talents and having an eye to the beauty of his person and the elegance of his manners, sent him on a diplomatic mission to the court of Spain. At Spain he met Velasquez, with whom he continued a correspondence of letters. He remained eight years in Italy, being summoned hastily to Antwerp by the illness of his mother, who died before he reached home.

Here he was induced to remain by the Archduke Albert, who appointed him his court painter. He founded a school at Antwerp which became crowded with pupils, his most famous scholars being Van Dyck, Jordaens, Snyders, Diepenbeck, Van Thulden, Zegers, and Quellinus. This was in 1609, and he was thirty-two years old. His fame became such that his works and his society were contended for by princes and monarchs. He married his

first wife, Isabella Brandt, in 1610, and built himself a magnificent house, painting it within and without. The Duke of Buckingham saw and coveted it. Rubens sold it to the Duke for ten times its original cost. At Antwerp Rubens led an uncommonly active life. As he himself assures us, while in the service of the Regent Albrecht and his consort Isabella, he had one foot always in the stirrup, making repeated trips to London, Paris, and Madrid, and devoting as much of his time to politics as to art. He performed important services as ambassador to Spain and England. Marie de Medici, Queen of France, invited him to her court, and he celebrated her life in a series of great works now to be seen in the Louvre at Paris. Rubens was knighted by Philip IV. of Spain and by Charles I. of England, who, in addition to other favors, gave him his own sword and a gold chain, which the painter wore ever afterward. In 1630, after the death of his first wife, he married one of the richest and most beautiful girls in all Flanders — Helen Fourment, then only sixteen years of age. In 1632, pending negotiations between Belgium and Holland, Rubens was in the latter country, and visited the workshops of many of its most famous painters. It is matter of astonishment, as Vosmaer says, that there exists no trace of any relations between him and Rembrandt, who was then famous, having painted his "Anatomical Lesson," and many other important works. And it is also singular that in the inventory of Rubens's works after his death, among his many pictures of various schools, the name of Rembrandt is conspicuously absent. Not so with Rembrandt, however, who possessed many engravings after Rubens's works, choice impressions before the lettering. Rubens died in 1640, possessed of immense wealth, after a career marked by all the distinctions that fame and universal admiration could bestow, accorded to him in the triple character of painter, diplomatist, and man. He was buried with extraordinary pomp in the church of St. Jacques, at Antwerp, where over his tomb is placed one of his most charming works — a picture of St. George; a work wholly formed, as tradition says, of the portraits of members of his family. Side by side in it are his two wives, then his daughters, his niece, the celebrated girl of the "Chapeau de Paille," his father, his grandfather, and finally his younger son, under the features of an angel, certainly one of the most adorable children he ever painted. Rubens himself figures there as St. George in shining armor, holding in his hand the banner of St. George.

Rubens was an almost universal genius in his art, and has left a vast number of canvases dealing with every kind of subject. He painted pictures sacred and secular, studies of animals and men, portraits of men and women, charming pieces treating wholly of children, grand historical and mythological works, and fine landscapes. His works are scattered all over Europe, but possibly the best idea of his range and versatility is conveyed by the collection in the gallery of the Pinakothek, at Munich, where there are many examples of him. In his time, over 1200 engravings were made from his pictures. The "Descent from the Cross," in the Cathedral of Antwerp, is generally conceded to be his masterpiece. This, with the "Elevation of the Cross" in the same cathedral, are two magnificent examples of the genius of the painter that must be seen before one can obtain a judicious estimate of his powers. If we are accustomed, from the numerous historical and mythological works of Rubens scattered all over Europe, to regard him in the light of a boisterous deity, of tremendous dash and fire, in the cool precincts of the Antwerp Cathedral we obtain an opposite view of his character and behold him wise, religious, and restrained. These works were painted shortly after his arrival in Italy, and while he was yet imbued with

"PORTRAIT OF JACQUELINE DE CORDES," BY RUBENS.

BRUSSELS MUSEUM.

the Italian spirit. The "Descent from the Cross" is a touching and impressive work, profound and tender in sentiment. The Saviour is being lowered from the cross into the arms of loving friends, by means of a winding-sheet. The value of the naked body against the sheet, and this in full light and relieved against a dark sky, is one of the most striking and effective things in art. The draperies of the others, in their rich and varied coloring, are all subdued to the faintest note, so that the faces come out with wonderful relief, and the eye naturally dwells upon the various emotions depicted in each, from the weeping countenance of the Virgin, pale as the body of her son, to the visage of the dead Lord calm in the repose of death, and finally to the lovely features of the Magdalene, whose bloom of health and youth, emphasizing the pallor of death, is the culminating note of color in the whole.

I could not understand why the best photographs and engravings I had seen of this work should all be so hard and ill-drawn, and so utterly void of the tender values and the floating atmospheric quality of the original, but the reason was evident enough when in the museum of Antwerp I saw what purports to be an original sketch by Rubens for the great work, and was informed by the custodian that all the photographs and engravings are executed from this poor thing, which bears the unequivocal marks of a copy, and a laborious and heavy copy at that. But being a bright and hard thing, it photographs and engraves well, and makes an attractive and marketable object for a shop-window.

The sketches in oil by Rubens are the most delightful things imaginable; being executed in thin glazings, or *frotted* in upon some warm ground, they have an airy and dreamily suggestive character; or else, if painted more solidly, they have a light and spirited touch and are charged with energy of character, as in his marvelous study of some negroes' heads to be seen in the Museum at Brussels.

An admirable example of his first stage of procedure in the painting of a picture is the sketch of the portrait of his second wife — Helen Fourment — with her two children, to be seen in the Louvre. The heads are the most finished portions. How charming in sentiment it is! The young mother, not more than twenty — for she was married at sixteen — is dreaming in bliss over her first son. The boy evidently is the occasion of the picture, which gives expression to the old feeling which exists among parents to the present day in Germany and Flanders, of doting upon the boy, but relegating the girl to the background of their regard. I like the natural innocence and unconsciousness of this little girl, coming in upon the scene with her apron filled possibly with flowers, as opposed to the decidedly conscious air of the boy, who already seems aware of the superior estimation in which he is regarded. He holds a dove by a silken cord in one hand and a perch in the other. This little fellow, of whom Rubens painted other portraits, in time succeeded his father as secretary of the State of Flanders. His name was Albert Rubens.

The portrait known as the "Chapeau de Paille," in the National Gallery of London, is that of a young lady in a black bodice with red sleeves, and a black Spanish beaver or felt hat. It is life size. How it came to be called the "Chapeau de Paille," is not known, since it does not resemble a straw hat. It is supposed that its present title is a corruption of *chapeau d'Espagne*, or *chapeau de poil*. The portrait is said to be that of Mlle. de Lunden, whom Rubens was once upon the point of marrying. The blending of a strong reflected light with a direct light gives a pleasing transparent illumination to the features, which are powerfully offset by the black hat and dress. Nothing could be more strikingly effective.

The portrait of the wife of Cordes, in

the Museum of Brussels, is another life-size bust. Though of a more serious order, it is none the less effective as a picture. What could be more stylish and telling than this black satin dress illuminated by cream-colored puffs and surmounted by a splendid display of lace and glittering jewelry against a gray background? This sumptuous display and love of sensuous beauty are never wanting in the works of Rubens.

T. C.

ANTHONY VAN DYCK

Chapter XIX

ANTHONY VAN DYCK

(1599–1641)

Fromentin, to whom we are all indebted for his excellent appreciations of the Dutch and Flemish masters, describes Van Dyck at the end of his career as one fêted, courted, ennobled, talented, luxurious, charming, dissipated, reckless,—"a Prince of Wales dying upon his accession to the throne who was by no means fitted to reign." The description is worth quoting to emphasize what Fromentin intimates, but does not directly say—namely, that Van Dyck never was a king in art. Rubens, Titian, Velasquez wore the purple and the crown; but Van Dyck, though of royal race, a prince of the blood and standing near the throne, never came to occupy it. This was not because he died at forty-two (Raphael and Giorgione died younger) but because he was not "fitted to reign." He had not the genius or the originality that should entitle him to the supreme place. He held high rank surely; but not the highest rank.

What Van Dyck would have been without Rubens for a master, is an unprofitable query often propounded. Suffice it to say that he was the best and most favored pupil of Rubens, and followed him as closely as he could; not by servilely imitating him, but by deriving from him type, style, inspiration, and mental stimulus. His artistic education in Flanders was of the best, his travel and study in Italy were like that of his master and productive of similar results, while his worldly success was again quite of a piece with that of his great predecessor. With similar tastes and views, he was a younger and a weaker brother of Rubens without by any means being a weak man. Nature never originally gave him the

elder's creative power, his versatility, his great range, his superb strength. The blood and bones, the robust life and energy, the brilliant color and technical grasp of the master were transmitted to the pupil in semblance more than in substance. One is made to feel in Van Dyck something of Rubens; but Rubens slightly attenuated, lacking in body, wanting in scope. Nature, however, compensated the pupil, in measure, by giving him more than his master of sensitiveness, distinction, and charm. Coming nearly twenty years after, he was enabled to refine the Rubens type, modify violent action in groups, and bring deeper meaning to the human face through delicacy of modeling and clearness in outline. Rubens was the first to throw out the perfected Flemish idea, and he did it with youthful vigor; Van Dyck came after, to refine and ennoble it as regards the human countenance at least. That in doing so he often paid heed to fashionable caprice and painted nobility to look more noble than it really was, that he flattered his sitters, and often gewgawed his art to make it attractive to the mob, only proves that he caught from his master the passion for high living and worldly success, and consequently sacrificed art at times to picture-making. Rubens's picture factory at Antwerp was not the best training-school for the painter who would live for art alone.

Van Dyck was remarkable, even among painters, for his early development. At ten he was a student of art; at nineteen he was a graduate, having been elected a member of St. Luke's Guild, at Antwerp. He was still, however, under Rubens's guidance, and by his advice he set out for Italy at twenty-three to complete his education by studying the great masters, as was the wont of the time. The Venetian influence made its appearance in his art almost immediately after his arrival in Italy, though it did not, any more than in the case of Rubens, override his individuality. He fancied Titian and Tintoretto, and his pictures painted while at Genoa — in what is called his "Genoese style" — show that he deepened his coloring and formed his composition somewhat after their example. Possibly, also, Correggio's type of the Magdalene pleased him, but no other Italian painter seemed to allure him, though he was in Rome and elsewhere in Italy for some years. In 1628 he returned to Antwerp, and his art, again, put on a Flemish look, with an admixture of Italian elegance in composition and color. Finally, he went to live at the court of Charles I., in England. There he grew conventional in composition (he had been

"PORTRAIT OF A LADY AND HER DAUGHTER," BY VAN DYCK.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

leaning that way for a long time), his brush-work and drawing became hurried and sketchy, and he seemed less careful in his choice and use of materials. Toward the last, carelessness went far to undermine his art, as dissipation his body. Reckless living finally broke him down, and he died at forty-two, leaving behind him a great reputation, a host of mourning friends, and nearly a thousand pictures.

His subjects were substantially those of all the Flemish painters of his time. He painted sacred scenes for the Church, allegorical and historical pieces for courts, and portraits for the tenants of courts. He painted all figure subjects; but his great reputation was chiefly founded on his portrait painting, and it is as a portrait painter that he is known to us to-day. This special branch of painting he early adopted on the advice of Rubens; and it seems to have been good advice, though Sir Joshua regretted that he did not devote himself to history painting, thinking that he might have excelled in that department. He certainly executed some admirable altar-pieces, besides many of an indifferent quality; but Rubens had gone before him in that field, and had said about all that Flanders was capable of saying. On the other hand, Rubens had been somewhat indifferent to portraiture, and Van Dyck had the opportunity of making this department quite his own. He was gifted with an eye that saw the elevated in the human presence, and in portraiture he conceived the idea of adding to this elevation the brilliant coloring of Rubens and the Venetians. This was a new departure, for the portrait up to that time had been usually regarded as something to be done in sober hues; though men like Bordone and Baroccio had made brilliant innovations that may have attracted Van Dyck's notice while in Italy. At any rate, he put into practice the idea of not only painting a portrait, but of adding to it brilliant decorative color and making of it a picture. This, in the seventeenth century, was a happy conceit, and the result was an almost instantaneous success. Nobility liked the idea of being handed down to posterity in stately pose and glowing color; and Van Dyck soon found that the orders for portraits outran the orders for altar-pieces. Thus, partly by inclination and partly by circumstances (for he always had an empty pocket), he became a most famous painter of portraits. Nevertheless, Sir Joshua was quite right in his appreciation of Van Dyck's historical pieces. He was a painter of mark in any and all departments; and if we of

to-day are less impressed with his excellence in large composed groups than in portraits, it may be owing to the nearness of Rubens. The latter's splendor eclipsed every light in the Flemish school.

In composition, Van Dyck had a faculty for borrowing wherever he could, and wherever he was compelled to invent, he invented. He helped himself to Rubens in Flanders, and to the Venetians in Italy. One of his best works, the "Mocking of Christ," at Berlin, was evidently inspired by a Titian of the same subject now in the Louvre; and the "Madonna of the Donors," shown in Mr. Cole's illustration, is somehow a reminder of the left portion of Tintoretto's "Marriage of St. Catherine," in the Ducal Palace at Venice, though the lines and groups are changed. He borrowed, he added to, he recreated, and that in art is called originality. In the completed picture there was something of formality in the poses, a little of the academic in the contrasts, and no great inspiration to be observed anywhere. The surprises one meets with in Rubens are lacking in Van Dyck. He was limited in inventive power as compared with his master. Yet, when it came to the portrayal of the single figure, he rose to a lofty height; though he was not always free from errors caused by haste, or possibly by lack of skill in his assistants. He was usually beautifully clear in outline; and in the modeling of the forehead, the eyes, the nose,— especially the delicate modeling of the nose,— the chin, and the side of the jaw, he was superb. It was just here that he showed his great ability; and there is no better example of it than the "Portrait of Richardot and his Son," shown in the accompanying engraving. The head and face of the man are absolutely fine and above all reproach. There is, however, one head attributed to Van Dyck which is superior to this of Richardot—in fact, taking it for all and all, it is the most powerfully drawn and modeled head in all portraiture. I refer to the "Portrait of Cornelius van der Geest" in the National Gallery, London. The knowledge of bone structure shown in the skull; the drawing of the eyes, the nose, the mouth; the modeling of the side of the jaw from the ear to the chin, are perfection. The simplicity, the certainty, the power of it are at once convincing and astounding. Nothing could be finer or nobler, truer as a representation of nature, or greater as pure art. But did Van Dyck paint it? It would seem impossible. It has not his touch, save in the costume; and the hand that did the costume was a different one from the

"THE MADONNA OF THE DONORS," BY VAN DYCK.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

hand that did the head. The picture is painted upon wood; the head is painted upon another substance, and is inserted in the wood. Did Rubens paint the head, and Van Dyck, then a pupil under him, paint the dress? It is possible; but the handling of the head is, again, not the handling of Rubens. The picture, as regards the painter of it, has always proved a puzzle; and one invariably ends by asking: If Van Dyck did not do it, who did do it? It lies between the master and the pupil. No other Flemish painter could have reached up to it; and Van Dyck could have done it only in a burst of inspiration which is apparent in no other known work of his hand.

In the Dresden Gallery the early drawing, composition, and flesh-coloring of Van Dyck are brought into sharp contrast with the early work of Rubens by two pictures placed side by side. The subject of both of them is "St. Jerome in the Wilderness"; both pictures are the same in size, composition, and color scheme. The comparison cannot be avoided, placed as the pictures are; and it results not too happily for Van Dyck. The drawing of the pupil is harsher, the modeling more violent and less effective, the color hotter and less luminous. The remark was ventured, some pages back, that no pupil of Rubens ever attained the master's flesh-coloring; and here is the proof of it in Rubens's best pupil. As compared with the master's work, his flesh is apoplectic, blistered, saturated with blood at the surface. All of Van Dyck's figure-pictures were inclined to undue warmth in the flesh. They likened Jordaens more than Rubens. After his Italian experience he grew hot in robes and in shadows, following with some exaggeration the warmth of Titian and Tintoretto. By way of relief he often put in masses of blue and other cool colors, with some sharpness of contrast; or he led the eye away from the main issue by sparkles and dashes of light and color on jewelry, embroidery, gold braids, rich garments. This became characteristic of his portraits as of his figure-pieces. Depth, warmth, and brilliancy in robe and costume, with architectural columns, looped-up draperies, and palatial furnishings, continued to show in his portraits from his Italian days to the end of his career. A late example of this is the "Portrait of Charles I."—the full-length figure standing near a horse in the Salle Carré of the Louvre. It is an attractive piece of color, barring the uncomfortable heat in the face of the attendant holding the horse, and is perhaps one of his most successful combinations

of the portrait and the picture. The composition, the drawing, the textures, the trees and sky, the horse, all go to the making of as fine a pictured portrait as any Fleming ever produced.

Van Dyck's handling was easy and rapid, after the style of Rubens; but never so effective, never so positive. He could drag broken whites about a forehead, or down a nose, or along a jaw, with great skill and much facility; but his brush was never very pronounced. The loading is slight; he evidently did not wish it to be obtrusive. Vigor of touch was not quite in keeping with his delicacy of drawing and modeling; and he had no idea of shocking the taste of his sitters by too much evidence of the painter. Even in costumes he was smooth and somewhat shallow in pigment, anxious enough to gain a textural surface, but not disposed toward heavy impasto or thickness in modeling. Tradition tells us of the great care he took in preparing his grounds, in choosing pigments, and in the use of lights and shadows after the Rubens teaching. Doubtless this was true of his early work; but later on, when success came to him, he grew less careful, used a good deal of black, and painted flesh over dark grounds in such a way that many of his pictures have darkened in the heads and hands, and become opaque in the shadows. The left hand of the Child in the "Madonna of the Donors," looks at present as though covered with coal soot; and those of the kneeling figures are quite as bad. Whether he used bitumen or not is unknown, but some disintegrating pigment has worked through many of his canvases and made their repainting necessary. I find written from year to year on the margins of my Munich catalogues, beside the titles of the Van Dycks, the words "ruined," "repainted," "black," "totally gone." Haste, bad pigments, and modern restorations, have played sad havoc with many of his works, despite all his accredited care about grounds, oils, and varnishes.

He left many pictures of varying merit, some of them superb, some merely good, some very indifferent through carelessness. Of pupils he had almost as many as Rubens, but he left no school. His art, however, was studied by painters who came after him; and his portraiture was the chief model of the English painters Reynolds, Gainsborough, Lawrence, and others. It was not a bad model, save as the brilliant is always more misleading with followers than the plain, the simple, and the true. Van Dyck's art was brilliant beyond question; though, oftentimes, in giving that quality

"PORTRAIT OF RICHARDOT AND HIS SON," BY VAN DYCK.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

he sacrificed something of sincerity and candor. The artificial in his pose and aristocratic bearing, the use of genteel hands for all characters, the grandiose elegance of his accessory objects, finally became mannerisms with him, but never disagreeable ones. We feel that the painter was often less free-spoken about the facts than he might have been; but we also feel that with all his conventionality and affectation he was a great painter — a prince of the royal blood, if not a king, in art.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

VAN DYCK was born at Antwerp, in 1599, of well-to-do parents. His mother was celebrated for a rare degree of skill in embroidery, and her love and sympathy guided the artist's infancy, which manifested itself in a precocious genius for art. She died when he was only eight years old, but his father made careful provision for the continuance of his artistic studies, and placed him, at the age of ten years, with Hendrik van Balen, a historical painter of great merit, and at the age of fifteen or sixteen he passed to the studio of Rubens, where he became this master's first and favorite pupil. Here his progress was so rapid that in 1618 he was enrolled as a master in the registers of the Guild of Saint Luke — an honor unprecedented in the case of a painter who had not yet completed his nineteenth year. Rubens now advised him to go to Italy and complete his education by the study of the great Italian masters, and, furthermore, to make portraiture his special vocation. But as his pictures were attracting attention far and wide, he was induced to accept an invitation to visit the English court of James I., which he did in 1620, when only twenty-one years old. The death of his father, however, among other events, brought him back to Antwerp in 1623, and immediately after his father's burial he resolved to depart for Italy, as Rubens had advised. At Venice, his first stopping-place, his time was assiduously occupied in studying and copying the works of Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, etc., and his sketch-books remain to attest the severity of his self-discipline, being crowded with memoranda from the treasures of Venetian galleries. Some idea of the marvelous rapidity of his brush is given in the fact that, proceeding to Genoa in this same year, 1623, and finding himself inundated with commissions from the nobility, who actually competed for the honor of sitting to him, he here completed portraits of the illustrious scions of the houses of Balbi, Spinola, Raggi, Pallavicino, Brignole, Durazzo, — two of which were equestrian portraits, — besides painting a few classical and sacred pictures, upward of a dozen important works, which are still the pride of the Genoese galleries, and before the year was ended had left the city for Rome. And this is not counting two religious works which upon his outset he executed for the parish church of Saventhem, not far from Brussels, and which are considered remarkably fine examples of his early style. At Rome he stayed two years, was the guest of Cardinal Bentivoglio, and had commissions from the Pope and many of the noble families. His portrait of the cardinal, now in the Pitti Palace at Florence, shows all

the highest qualities of his art, and glows with the rich and harmonious coloring of the Venetians. His journeyings in Italy included Florence, Milan, Turin, and other cities, and he even went as far south as Sicily, where, at Palermo, he produced some remarkable portraits. When, in 1628, he finally returned to Antwerp, where his master Rubens was at the zenith of his glory, he naturally suffered by comparison; but Rubens, soon departing on an embassy to Spain, left the field clear to his famous pupil, and demands for his works increased thick and fast. During the years that followed, before he took up his permanent abode in England, his brush was kept incessantly busy, and he painted many of his finest creations. Of the "Crucifixion," painted for the Church of the Récollets at Mechlin, but now to be seen in the cathedral of that city, Sir Joshua Reynolds has the following: "This picture, on the whole, may be considered as one of the first pictures in the world, and gives the highest idea of Van Dyck's power; it shows that he had truly a genius for history painting, if it had not been taken off by portraits." Van Dyck also executed many etchings during this period, which are esteemed very highly.

Van Dyck quitted Flanders for good in 1632, and repaired once more to the court of England. The Earl of Arundel, his friend, was instrumental in bringing his work under the notice of Charles I., and the picture which is said to have been the immediate cause of the king's determination to have Van Dyck at court was a portrait he had painted of one of the court musicians named Laniere. Walpole, in his life of Mrs. Mary Beale, quotes an interesting passage from the manuscript diary of her husband relating to this picture, which affords a glimpse of the assiduity of the artist:

1672. 20 April.

. . . Mr. Lely told me at the same time, as he was studiously looking at my Bishop's picture of Van Dyck's and I chanced to ask him how Sir Antony cou'd possibly devise to finish in one day a face that was so exceeding full of work, and wrought up to so extraordinary a perfection — I believe, said he, he painted it over fourteen times. And upon that he took occasion to speak of Mr. Nicholas Laniere's picture of Sr. Anto. V. D. doing which, said he, Mr. Laniere himself told me he satt seaven entire dayes for it to Sr. Anto. and that he painted upon it of all those seaven dayes both morning and afternoon, and only intermitted the time they were at dinner. And he said likewise, that tho' Mr. Laniere satt so often and so long for his picture, that he was not permitted so much as once to see it till he had perfectly finished the face to his own satisfaction. This was the picture which being show'd to king Charles I., caused him to give order that V. Dyck shou'd be sent for over into England.

Van Dyck was received at court with every mark of favor and distinction, and his rapid preferment was such that after three months the king made him a knight, and settled on him a pension of two hundred pounds a year for life. His handsome person, engaging manners, and brilliant social gifts, together with the reputation of his talents and the special favor of the king, combined to make him the lion of the day, and his studio was the resort of the nobility. Meanwhile his industry was unflagging, and his fertility and productiveness were great. Often the king himself would drop down in his barge to spend an afternoon in the fascinating society of the gifted young artist. His habits were luxurious and extravagant to prodigality, and his hospitality was unbounded. He kept open house, and frequently detained his noble sitters to princely dinners. He figured as a patron of the fine arts, was fond of music, and specially liberal to musicians, whose services he deemed indispensable to the perfection of any social entertainment. But though his receipts were great, his expenditures were greater,

"A PHILOSOPHER IN MEDITATION," BY REMBRANDT.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

and he often found himself in pecuniary straits. He frankly confessed to the king, on one occasion when money matters were broached, that "a man whose house is open to his friends, and his purse to his mistress, is likely to make acquaintance with empty coffers." His financial troubles were doubtless aggravated by the disturbed condition of the country, which was verging on revolution. His pension came to remain unpaid, and court patronage to be a thing more of honor than of profit. Instead of endeavoring to balance his accounts by the ordinary method of economy and hard work, he was led into seeking gold in the alembic — experimenting with alchemy in the delusive pursuit of the philosopher's stone. In this he was encouraged by the example or advice of his friend Sir Kenelm Digby, and it was a subject which in those days appeared to many intelligent minds worthy of consideration. In this vain quest of treasure he spent much precious time, money, and health. A friend came from Flanders to visit him at this period, and found him brooding over his crucible, broken in health and spirits — a complete wreck. His friends and the king, considering his miserable condition, concluded that a good marriage would change the course of his mind, and give him a fresh impetus. Accordingly he was married about 1640 to Lady Mary Ruthven, a charming, well-born maiden; but sickness and disappointments terminated the brief remainder of his career in 1641. Notwithstanding his expensive style of living, he left property to the value of about a hundred thousand dollars.

So far as portraiture goes, Van Dyck occupied a high place. His works have an air of elegance and distinction and a mundane grace and courtliness naturally befitting his title of "painter to the king." Though the majority of his pictures are in the private houses of the English nobility, and comparatively few are found in public museums, those which I have engraved from the Louvre, viz., "Portrait of a Lady and her Daughter," "Portrait of Richardot and his Son," and "The Madonna of the Donors," are among the best.

T. C.

DAVID TENIERS THE YOUNGER

Chapter XX

DAVID TENIERS THE YOUNGER

(1610–1690)

Between Van Dyck and Teniers the Younger stretches the whole length and breadth of Flemish art. They are the opposing poles, and they stand for two very different conceptions of painting held in Flanders during the seventeenth century. Van Dyck was a painter of elevated life, with a style largely influenced by the great Italian masters. He was a figure painter who, like Rubens, blended the Flemish with the Italian to make a new art. Teniers, on the contrary, was not influenced by Italy; he never went there, and had nothing to do with the large decorative composition. He was a thorough Fleming, painting the commonplace life that he found on his native heath, a cousin in art to the Dutch genre-painters Ostade and Steen, a painter of small easel pictures. In fact, he was Dutch in all except birth and some features of technic peculiar to the Flemish school.

It is said that he was a pupil of Rubens, or, at the least, was influenced by him and by Brouwer; but there is no record to verify this, and little trace of the influence of either master in Teniers's work. He was a pupil of his father, and learned from him his subject, his point of view, and his technic. He was an improvement upon his father, and, counting out Brouwer, who was more Dutch than Flemish, he was certainly head and shoulders over all the other genre-painters in Flanders. He painted all themes — peasants, boors, ale-houses, kitchens, fêtes, musical parties, landscapes, portraits, battles, biblical scenes, allegories — but he always treated them in a genre style, with Flemish types and costumes, and in a true Netherlands spirit. Whether he told of the parable of the

Prodigal Son, or of an idle group of people in front of a tavern, the conception was the same. In this respect he was, again, like the Dutch painters, valuing his art for what it looked, and caring little for what it meant. As depicting actual historic occurrences many of his pictures are absurd enough; but as art in color, light, air, grouping, they are excellent. His representations seemed to have a more pointed meaning when he pictured alchemists and St. Anthonys surrounded by goblins, bats, flying-fish, and small devils. It may be that he meant such scenes as a hit at philosophers and theologians; and then again it is possible he was merely following the subjects of the Brueghels. At any rate there is a comic vein about them that he evidently enjoyed. As things dramatic or tragic they were decidedly weak. Teniers had little of the dramatic about him, and though he occasionally showed action, he displayed no emotion. His work is picturesque, seldom literary, never passionate. He used Flemish types, and disposed them in his compositions much as he might chairs or tables, or church steeples or doorposts—for their value in line and color. The psychological in the human face bothered him little; and for that matter, he used only two or three faces for all his characters. He was very shrewd in his placing of objects and colors, and sometimes he was excessive in this very feature by dragging into his composition numberless small objects, to gain a sparkle of light or to fill a vacancy on the canvas. His St. Anthony pictures are finical, petty, and spotty in small devils with flashing eyes, that crawl or fly here and there across the canvas.

In open-air pieces he loved great sky space, broken cloud effects, architecture, distant towers; and he handled these with a very sensitive regard for aërial perspective, as may be seen in Mr. Cole's illustration, one of the most beautiful of all his works, and yet hardly a representative picture. In interiors, he was again successful in atmosphere, and, like Ostade and De Hooch, gained it with two or more planes in his picture, by using a screen, a partition, or a back room seen through a doorway. Neither indoors nor out-of-doors did he use the heavy shadows illuminated by sharp shafts of light, as did the Dutch painters. His illumination was more uniform, and in landscape it came from the sky, clear, bright, almost sunny. He was fonder, however, of the broken half-light, because it comported better with his somewhat monotonous scheme of color. It was his practice to block out a picture in monochrome, usually brown, and

"AFTERNOON," BY TENIERS THE YOUNGER.

ANTWERP MUSEUM.

"THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS," BY REMBRANDT.

LOUVRE, PARIS.

upon this to superimpose dark greens for foliage, pale blues for sky, carmines for flesh, and touches of gray for shadow. The impasto was thin, and the warmth of the under color was felt through the surface pigments, tingeing and tempering the coloring of the whole. In shadows his pigment barely covered the ground, and in many of his pictures the ground can be seen shining through. He did this to gain transparency; while in his lights he loaded quite freely in spots to gain reflection by opacity. When he had thus worked up his picture from its monochrome state, he added spots of color in costumes and accessories; and when the picture was finished, he dashed a line of white or blue on a cock's feather protruding from a red cap or hat, and signed his initials.

Teniers's pictures give the impression of being produced with little effort; and, indeed, it is said he often painted a picture in a day. He worked with great rapidity and sureness, and with a charming sprightliness of touch. His pigments look fresh as though laid but yesterday, and there is always a snap and sparkle about the lights that lend to vivacity. Sir Joshua thought his work worthy of the closest attention from those who desired to excel in the mechanical knowledge of art. "His manner of touching, or what we call handling, has, perhaps, never been excelled; there is in his pictures that exact mixture of softness and sharpness which is difficult to execute." He had several of these "manners," showing principally in his use of color, and corresponding to different periods of his development. At first he was somewhat sharp and harsh, in the style of his master, with a deep, brown tone. After 1640 he became golden, and, still later, silvery. In his age he returned again to the golden tone.

He left some seven hundred pictures, but no school. No pupils of consequence succeeded him. He was the last of the masterful painters of Flanders; and after him came the eighteenth century decline—a period in art remarkable for nothing but littleness in both men and measures.

NOTES BY THE ENGRAVER

TENIERS THE YOUNGER was born at Antwerp in 1610, and as early as 1632, when only twenty-two years old, he was admitted to the Guild of Antwerp. His father, David Teniers the elder, a painter of repute, was his instructor, and

he enjoyed the society of Rubens, as well as the friendship of other distinguished artists. He married a daughter of Jan, or "Velvet" Brueghel in 1637, when twenty-seven years old, at which ceremony Rubens was one of the witnesses, and came into the favor and patronage of the nobility. He became Dean of the Guild of St. Luke when thirty-five years old, and later was instrumental in the erection of the academy of fine arts. Upon the registers of the guild his name is written without the final *s*. His wife dying, he married in 1656 a daughter of the secretary of state for Brabant. By means of his talents and pleasing personal qualities he attained a higher position in society than had before been occupied by any genre-painter of the school. The stadtholder of the Spanish Netherlands — Archduke Leopold William — appointed Teniers court-painter, and also groom of the chambers, including the charge of the picture-gallery, and he was confirmed in both these offices by the successor of the archduke, Don Juan of Austria, natural son of Philip IV. of Spain. His art at the same time obtained him a European reputation, so that other great potentates, Philip IV., Christina of Sweden, and the Elector of the Palatinate, gave him commissions. Christina, in addition to recompensing him magnificently, sent him her portrait and a gold chain. Teniers became prosperous and popular, and lived in grand style at his château of "Three Towers" at Perck, between Velvorde and Mechlin, entertaining noblemen, literary and scientific personages, and art patrons, who made a point of visiting the painter. He gave Don Juan of Austria lessons in painting, and this prince, before quitting the Netherlands, painted a portrait of Teniers's son, and presented it to Teniers as a souvenir and token of his regard. For the Archduke Leopold William Teniers painted a great number of small copies of pictures in that prince's gallery, which were engraved in Teniers's "Theatrum Pictorium," a work that became widely celebrated.

His extraordinary technical facility of hand, and his untiring industry, enabled Teniers to execute a prodigious number of works. He declared it would need a gallery two leagues in length to contain all his pictures. It is said that he began and finished many of his canvases at a single sitting. His versatility, and his power of imitating the manner of the most various masters, as well as the great range of his subjects, caused him to be styled the "Proteus of painting," for although the animated delineation of the peasant world, under the most varying forms, was his favorite sphere, he frequently depicted scenes from the realm of fancy. The guard-house, with its old armor, drums, and flags, he often painted; and also cattle-pieces and landscapes, wherein his delicate feeling for nature is evident.

The many works executed by Teniers during a working life of three-score years are widely scattered throughout Europe. The gallery of Madrid alone has 53, St. Petersburg 40, the Louvre 36, Dresden 30, Vienna 18, the National Gallery of London 6. The little town of Cassel has 10, and I counted 9 in the Antwerp Gallery. From Antwerp I selected the engraved example. The original is but little larger than the engraving, measuring six and one quarter by eight and one half inches. Its title is "L'Après-diner" (Afternoon). It is an example of his best period. The "silver" manner of Teniers is a close approach to the cool gray air of nature, and with this style there followed a more precise and careful treatment, though no diminution of that light and sparkling touch wherein the separate strokes of the brush are left unbroken — a touch in which he stands unexcelled by any other genre-painter.

T. C.